

A HISTORY OF ROME

A. F. GILES, M.A.



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A HISTORY OF ROME



ROMAN ROADS IN ITALY

A HISTORY OF ROME

By A. F. GILES, M.A.

(EDIN. ET OXON.)

FRASER LECTURER IN ANCIENT HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH



LONDON: T. C. & E. C. JACK
67 LONG ACRE, W.C., AND EDINBURGH
NEW YORK: DODGE PUBLISHING CO.

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A HISTORY OF ROME

I

THE CITY AND ITS INSTITUTIONS

ROMAN history is the history of a *state*, rather than of a *people* or a *country*. It advances somewhat in the manner of a widening series of concentric circles ; first a single city among a group of kindred communities in the Latin plain bounded by the Tiber, the Sabine and Volscian hills, and the Tuscan sea ; then a united Latin power, with the city of Rome as its head ; then a power embracing the whole of Italy, and extending its control over the Mediterranean coast-lands ; and, finally, a world-empire, including within its citizenship a great variety of races, united in a common allegiance to the Roman Emperor, and enjoying a common civilisation. In the achievement of this result, which was fully attained by the middle of the third century after Christ, the native Romans took other peoples into partnership with them—their near kindred of the Latin stock first of all ; then the other races of Italy, Umbrians, Samnites, Etruscans, and Greeks ; and then, by a continuous process of enfranchisement, the inhabitants of their conquered territories beyond Italy, in Spain, Gaul, the Danubian lands, Greece and the Graecised eastern countries, and northern Africa. All these peoples, in the end, called themselves Romans, and shared in the benefits and the burdens of the Roman civilisation : thus about the middle of the first century A.D. we find S. Paul, by descent a Jew, by nativity a Cilician of Tarsus, claiming the liberties and privileges of a Roman citizen as his birthright. Many of the greatest names in the latter parts of the history are those of men who were not Roman by birth,

nor even Italian: Marius, the general who saved Italy from the Teutonic invasion, and Cicero, whom one may call the master of Roman prose, and who was also a representative statesman of his time, were both natives of Arpinum in the Volscian hills, and their forefathers had resisted the Romans in many an early war; Trajan and Hadrian, the two greatest Emperors of the second century A.D., were of Spanish extraction, though ultimately descended from Italian emigrants; of the third century Emperors comparatively few were of Roman blood, and most of them were Illyrian; Papinian and Ulpian, the greatest of the imperial lawyers, were both of the Greek East, the latter a Syrian from Tyre. It is therefore clear that the Roman name, in its widest extension, means something different from a mere racial or geographical expression: it implies a civilisation, a culture, above all, a state-system. But the name originated in the city of Rome, and to the beginnings of that city we must now turn.

Rome emerges into the light of history as a small, compact, and united community settled on the left bank of the Tiber some fifteen or twenty miles from the river-mouth. The city was built on a group of low hills or bluffs rising steeply from the stream. It was formed by the amalgamation of several smaller and earlier settlements, which combined, at some epoch which cannot be precisely dated, to have a common stronghold or place of refuge for war-time, on the westernmost of the heights, the famous Capitol, and a common market and meeting place in the valley to the east of it, which became the Roman Forum. The site was determined by various causes. It lay on the principal river of the west coast of Italy, which afforded access to the interior, and it was far enough from the sea to be safe from pirates. It also held an important defensible position in relation to the crossing of the Tiber, which formed the frontier-line between two opposing peoples. To the west and north-west, in the country which is now called Tuscany, were the cities of the Etruscans, a race which had migrated to Italy from the eastern Mediterranean and settled in this region, which they held as a group of conquering and ruling aristocracies. Their hostility to Rome was a recurrent factor in Roman history in its earlier stages, but their power was already beginning to wane when that history emerges into the clear

light of day. To the east and south, in the hill-encircled plain, were the communities of the Latins, a race of the true Italian stock, which had entered Italy from the Alpine region, far back in prehistoric time, and had settled to form a loosely-federated group of towns of which Rome was one. Rome, in fact, constituted an outpost or frontier-guard of the Latins against Etruria: the chief priests of Rome throughout her history were called the "Bridge-makers," a name which they seem to have inherited from the early kings, and which probably meant that the first duty of the city and its kings was to keep in repair and to guard the bridge which at this point of the stream gave access to and from the enemy's country.

The settlement, thus favourably planted, early began to attract a new population of traders and artisans who joined themselves to the original farmer-settlers, and set up their crafts and guilds in the market-quarter along the river. What effect their presence had upon Roman politics we shall see presently.

Farther up the Tiber valley, where it leaves the borders of the Latin plain and enters the mountains, dwelt other races, of the same Italian stock as the Latins, but belonging, apparently, to later waves of the southward-flowing tide of migration. The Latins, as first-comers, had settled in the plains: these more recent peoples had kept to the hills, moving gradually along the central Apennine ridge, and appearing in the coast-regions later. To this group belonged the Sabines, occupying the hill-country north of Rome, with their kindred the Umbrians beyond them; and in the Apennine districts to the south and east, the Samnites, the last Italian race to submit to the Roman dominion.

Rome, as the Roman legends profess to tell, was founded about the middle of the eighth century B.C. Its traditions and some of its institutions combine to prove that it was at first governed by kings, but the figures of these rulers are very dimly discernible in the morning mists of history. When the mists have begun to clear, the Roman state is already a *republic*. This word, and the idea which it expresses, are both Roman. It implies that the business of the community, in its relations to its neighbours and its gods, and in the relations of its members to one another, is managed by re-

sponsible officials, appointed by the community as a whole, as opposed to irresponsible private individuals. These officials are themselves governed by custom, that body of usages of the community which is sanctified by long practice, and gradually finds expression in written law. Thus the Roman constitution is an organic growth, arising out of the character and custom of the people, not an artificial structure erected by conscious effort. It develops certain institutions, which are the organs through which its life acts. These may be arranged in three groups.

(i) *The Magistracies*.—The conception of magistracy, embodied in the word *imperium*, is the key to almost all the problems of Roman political theory. *Imperium* in the Roman republic means an authority vested by the community in one or more of its members. It implies two sets of relations, first between its holder, the magistrate, and the whole body of the citizens; and second, between its holder and the individual citizen. In the first case, the magistrate is empowered to ascertain the will of the people, for instance in the making of new laws or the election of new magistrates, and to represent them in their dealings with the gods and with other communities. In the second, he is empowered to lay his commands upon the individual citizen in the name of the state and to enforce them by punishment—fine, flogging, imprisonment, or death. This includes both the power of the judge to sentence, and that of the general to command the soldier. In exercising these powers, the magistrate is required by custom to seek the advice of the Council, a body of men qualified by position and experience to advise. Further, in historical times, certain limits have been imposed upon his authority. (a) He is appointed for a fixed period, usually for one year, at the end of which he resumes the rank of an ordinary citizen. (b) Every magistracy—apart from one exceptional case—is held by more than one man at a time: these are of equal authority, and each of them may, by a simple veto, debar his colleague or colleagues from any action which he disapproves. (c) Any citizen against whom a magistrate has pronounced a capital sentence may appeal to the Assembly to reverse it, except when the magistrate is acting as general in the field, in which case his authority is absolute.

The exception referred to is the office of *dictator*, which, in brief, was a temporary reversion to monarchy in times of such danger as demanded an undivided and absolute authority. The dictator had no colleague and his judgment was above appeal, but he held office for a fixed term, usually of six months.

As the community's affairs became more complex, the number of magistrates was increased, and their functions were differentiated. At the head of the state were the two *consuls*, equal and supreme in all departments, responsible for the general policy of the state, and commanding-in-chief in time of war. To them were added from time to time other officers—the *praetors*, whose chief business was to sit as judges, but who could also take command in the field; the *quaestors*, who were paymasters and assistants to the consuls; the *aediles*, in charge of public records, buildings, and markets; the *censors*, who kept the registration lists and the roll of senators, and gave out public contracts in the name of the state. The three last classes were not invested with the full *imperium*, and could not pronounce sentence of death. There was also another class of officials, the officers of the Commons, whose history and character must be dealt with separately. And again, when Rome began to make conquest of territories beyond Italy, further changes were made in the magisterial system.

(ii) *The Assemblies*.—The ultimate political force in the Roman state was the will of the citizens, and that will expressed itself in the votes of the Assemblies. The most important, though not the most ancient of these, was the Meeting of the Centuries, which, in brief, was the muster of the warriors, arranged in their “hundreds.” The “hundred” or century consisted nominally of a hundred men, and each century had one vote in the meeting, determined by the majority of the individual votes of its members: but the centuries were so grouped in five “classes” that the wealthier landholders, who were of course the minority of the whole body, possessed an actual majority of votes; and the landless folk were all contained in one single century, having only one vote. The Assembly of the Centuries, therefore, was a body where the balance inclined strongly in favour of wealth, though this must be understood in a comparative sense. In this early period,

large fortunes were rare: the ordinary citizen of Rome was a small yeoman-farmer, working his land and tending his cattle with his own hands.

Again, the Assembly, though it was the final authority in the electing of magistrates, the making of laws, the decision of appeals on capital charges, and the declaration of war, could act only under the presidency of a magistrate duly invested with *imperium*: its vote could be given only at his summons, and on questions proposed by him. None but such a magistrate could submit a project of law to be passed. The sovereign people, therefore, was strictly confined in the exercise of its sovereignty.

(iii) *The Senate*.—As has been said, the magistrate is required by custom to seek the advice of persons qualified to give it, and the body of such persons grows into the Senate, which became the most powerful element in the constitution. The magistrate summons to his council, according to custom, the “elders” of the community—the heads of the chief houses, and those whose age and experience give weight to their opinion. All ex-magistrates, in virtue of the experience which they have gained when in office, are practically certain to be made members of Senate, and gradually the rank of senator becomes quite definite. The roll of the House was revised every five years by the censors, who filled up vacancies occurring in the interval by nominating men who had become qualified by their services. Such a body, standing in relation to the magistrate, whose office was held only for a year, naturally acquired a strong control over his actions. It became practically impossible for him to act without, or contrary to, the advice of the Senate, though in theory his magisterial powers gave him an independent authority. The Senate was a permanent body, perpetually recruited; it embodied the wisdom and experience of the leading men in Rome: and thus it had the tradition of many generations behind it. The individual magistrate would have little personal experience of his own duties, and would naturally desire to fortify himself with the advice of such a council. Again, the Senate, unlike the Assemblies, could discuss and deliberate. Each senator, or at any rate the senior members, spoke in turn on the question of business submitted by the magistrate; and finally, the body voted to determine the majority of

opinionous, and the resolution thus passed was the authoritative advice of the body. In this manner, it directed the foreign and domestic policy of the state, discussed the bills which the magistrates were to submit to the Assemblies, and, in general, conducted the government through the magistrates, who became its instruments and servants.

II

THE CONFLICT OF THE ORDERS

THE foregoing account is true, in the main, of the Roman republic in its middle period, about the third and second centuries before Christ. But this constitution was the result of a long process of development, which, though on the whole regular and peaceful, was not completed without incidents, and even long successions, of trouble and dispute. It was not without tribulation and change that Rome was able to achieve the solid internal unity which made her supreme among the states of Italy; this unity and solidity are her most notable qualities, and yet in her early history she appears as a divided city, troubled by an internal war of classes which was waged with various fortune during some two hundred years. This was the strife between Patricians and Plebeians. It began with a demand for the redress of grievances: it continued in a demand for political power. It therefore centres round the question of the individual citizen's rights and privileges.

The Roman state was an aggregate of *families* or *households*, each of which was subject to the absolute control of the house-father, the *paterfamilias*. The institution of the family was older than the state, and in many respects, especially in the form of its religion, the state was modelled upon the family. The *paterfamilias* held the family property. He had absolute authority over all its members, and might punish them even with death: but in taking any important step he must consult the family-council, just as the head of the state must consult the council of state. As head of a household he was, in turn, a full member of the civic community: his sons and grandsons,

though they were men grown, were covered by his authority before the civil law: but in public relations, the father might be under the command of his son, if the latter happened to be a magistrate.

The families, again, were associated in larger groups, the *clans*. A clan was an aggregate of several families bearing the same clan-name, supposed to trace their descent from a common ancestor, and participating in certain common rites of religion.

Originally, then, every full citizen of Rome was a member of a family and a clan; the son of a *paterfamilias*, born in wedlock, and thus himself capable of attaining the independent standing of a *paterfamilias* at his father's death. But this description does not cover all the free adult male inhabitants of the Roman community. From a very early stage, perhaps from the very beginning of the community's life, there were other, subordinate members or adherents, who in course of time formed the numerical majority of the body-politic.

The exact lines of the division between the two orders, however, are far from clear. It is certain that the same or similar classes and grades existed in practically all the states of the ancient world of Greece and Italy, and it seems probable that they were ultimately due to differences of wealth. From various causes, some of which may be clearly stated, certain members of the community had come to be in a position of dependence or subordination, whether to the community as a whole or to separate patrician families or clans. The words *plebs*, meaning the whole class of such persons, and plebeians, its individuals, mean simply "the masses," the multitude of undistinguished and inferior people who make up the community, as opposed to the patricians, the "persons of family." The plebeian body would be recruited by two different processes, of addition and degradation.

In the latter case, the plebeian is one who has fallen into an inferior position owing to poverty, which leads to debt, obliges him to labour for his wealthier creditors, and deprives him of the full exercise of his rights. In the former, he is one who has come into the Roman community from without; being either a slave who has received his personal freedom, in which case he and his children and children's children become dependents of the family of the original owners; or a foreigner who has come

to settle at Rome as a trader, or as a refugee fleeing from justice or oppression in his own state, and who, having no rights at Rome, is obliged to seek the protection of a patrician house; or a citizen of a conquered state which has been absorbed by Rome.

Whatever the various causes may have been, the patricians certainly claimed the monopoly of certain political and civil rights, the chief of which was the right to be elected magistrates. The plebeians had to serve in the army, and voted in the Assemblies; but there, owing to the century-system, they were in a constant minority when the upper classes were united. The internal history of early Rome, therefore, is largely dominated by the struggles of the plebeians to obtain regular means of redress for their grievances, and ultimately to secure for themselves equal political and civil rights with the patricians.

The condition of these inferior and oppressed people under the early republic was particularly hard in that there was as yet no organised method of reform provided by the constitution. In order to find a remedy, they were driven to the last argument of the poor, namely to refuse to render that service which the community as a whole required of them. Industry was not yet organised; each household, in the main, was self-supporting; and the only service for which the state depended on the plebeians was fighting. Their first method, therefore, was a military "general strike." The *plebs* left Rome in a body, thus drawing off the larger portion of the fighting force which, in a time of almost constant warfare with neighbouring communities, was vitally necessary to Rome. They assembled on a hill some three miles north of the city, and there they elected two of their number to represent and champion their case against the patricians. These "Tribunes of the Commons" were thus invested with a new kind of power: the *plebs* bound itself by oath to protect their persons, so that anyone who resisted their will laid himself open to the vengeance of the whole plebeian body—an argument which was rendered irresistible by force of numbers. It was the tribunes' duty to succour any plebeian who was oppressed by a patrician magistrate, and when their power to do so was admitted by the state, a new force had appeared in the constitution. The patricians, seeing that the very existence of Rome was threatened, wisely gave in: the state

admitted the right of the *plebs* to elect its own tribunes, and the right of the tribunes to stay the hand of any magistrate proceeding against a plebeian, provided the tribune intervened in person. This meant that the state recognised the *plebs* as a corporate body within itself, having the right and the means of corporate action. From this time forward—tradition places the first “secession” or strike of plebeians at the beginning of the fifth century B.C.—the *plebs* was, so to say, a state within the state, having its own institutions of magistracy and assembly.

Much of the political conflicts which followed arose out of the efforts of the community to adjust itself to this change. In the final issue, the plebeian corporation and its officers were wrought into the frame of the constitution, instead of being left outside it: they became, in short, instruments for the regular expression of the popular will. The details of this process are not clear, but its result, attained about the beginning of the third century B.C., may be stated as follows. The meeting of the *plebs* acquired the right to pass resolutions having the force of law, provided they were carried under the presidency and on the proposal of a duly elected tribune. Such laws were binding on the whole state, patricians as well as plebeians, and were thus equal in force to the findings of the full Assembly. The new body was much more thoroughly democratic than the old: it voted by groups, called tribes, each of which was composed of the plebeians resident and registered in a single district. Within each tribe, the rich and the poor man alike counted for one. The plebeian meeting was more easily convened than the Assembly, and in course of time the number of tribunes was raised to ten: thus there were ten new officers competent to propose and carry legislation, and most of the legislative business of the state came to be done through them, in the plebeian meeting.

The tribunate, then, was to be used for the redress of plebeian grievances. The tribunes could, in the first place, ascertain the will of the plebeian body; in the second place, they could stop any magistrate from taking any positive action within the city or in its immediate neighbourhood, by simply interposing their *veto*. Thus when a reform was demanded by the *plebs* and refused by the Senate and magistrates, the tribunes could

"hold up" the business of the state until the desired change was made. Only when the consuls were commanding in the field were they freed from this hindrance, for the tribunes were not allowed to leave Rome during their year of office. Thus military discipline was preserved in the face of an enemy outside; and if the danger were very close and pressing, a dictator might be appointed for the time being, against whose authority the tribune's veto had no force. On the other hand, in time of peace, there was available a very simple and powerful machinery of reform.

The chief plebeian grievances arose out of the administration of the law, the use of the common lands, and the right of being elected to magistracy.

(i) The custom of the state, that body of religious and legal forms and usages which was slowly developing into law, was at first known only to the patricians, and was administered by patrician magistrates. In particular, the law about debt was very severe. A poor plebeian might be compelled, by a bad harvest, or by the loss of a good one owing to war, to borrow money for bread-corn or seed-corn from a rich patrician neighbour, whose farm was large enough to provide a surplus. Failing to pay off his debt—for the rate of interest was very high—he would be haled before the magistrates and bound over to labour for his creditor, thus losing his liberty of movement and even the hope of regaining it. In this and in other cases, the common man had no knowledge of the processes of law involved: these were the secret of the patricians. It was therefore necessary that the laws should be published so that all could know them, and this was one of the first demands of the plebeians. Within half a century from the institution of the tribunate, therefore, a commission of ten was appointed to collect, amend, and publish the legal customs of the state, which were thus embodied in a code, the Laws of the Twelve Tables. The commissioners seem to have attempted to make themselves a permanent and despotic government by refusing to resign, but the plebeians threatened another strike, the promised code was published, and at the same time the rights and privileges of the plebeians and their tribunes were re-affirmed in a series of constitutional statutes proposed by the consuls Valerius and Horatius in 449. The statutes form one

of the great charters of Roman liberties: they secured anew the validity of resolutions passed in the plebeian meeting, the sanctity of the persons of the tribunes, and the right of any citizen to appeal to the Assembly against a capital sentence. Shortly afterwards a law was passed recognising marriages between a patrician and a plebeian.

(ii) The second plebeian grievance was connected with the public or common lands. Most of the territory of Rome was, of course, held by private owners, and could be bought and sold by regular legal methods. But there still remained a considerable extent of land, mostly pasture, which belonged to the state, and which all citizens had the right to use for grazing on payment of a registration fee for each head of cattle. But the wealthier patrician landholders had seized upon most of these commons for their own use, leaving little or no room for the cattle of the plebeians. Further, as we shall see in the next chapter, Rome was all this time extending her dominion over neighbouring communities, and a great deal of land came into the ownership of the Roman state by conquest—part arable, part upland pasture, part forest and unreclaimed waste. In some cases it might be allotted to individual citizens in freehold (especially by the plantation of colonies: see Chapter III); in others, it might be sold, or let on lease; or again, in the case of pasture and waste, it might be proclaimed open, either for squatting or for grazing. Most of the land included under the last of these classes was taken up by patricians, who had enough cattle and other capital to occupy it at once; and thus the poorer plebeians were still further deprived of the enjoyment of what they had helped to win for the state by fighting. Out of this condition of things arose a long series of agrarian agitations, beginning as early as the opening of the fifth century B.C. Gardens and building-sites were demanded for the poor, and they also asserted their right to a fair share of the pasture and forest. During the first part of the fourth century a long conflict was waged, until in 367 a law was passed prohibiting any one citizen from squatting or grazing on more than a fixed extent of the public lands. Unfortunately, as we shall see later, this law soon fell into disuse, and the land tended more and more to come under the control of a comparatively small class of the wealthier citizens.

(iii) The third grievance was political, but its cause was a matter of religion. The patricians, who as "persons of family" claimed to be the true original members of the state, were alone qualified to approach the gods of the state. And since the approval or assent of the gods must be obtained for all public actions, such actions—the holding of a full Assembly, the election of magistrates, declarations of war, and so forth—could be directed and carried out only by patricians. All magistrates, therefore, must be patricians. So long as this was so, the plebeians, at best, could exercise only a negative and partial control of the business of state, though they now formed the large majority of the citizen-body. Thus during the latter part of the fifth century B.C. and the beginning of the fourth there appeared a demand, which in the end became irresistible, that plebeians should be made eligible for the magistracy—*i.e.* for the consulship, which as yet was the only high executive office. This demand was stoutly resisted by the patricians, and they played a long and clever political game in defence of their monopoly, on the details of which space forbids me to enter: at any rate, the demand for political equality was combined with that for agrarian relief, and after a long and stubborn fight, both demands were conceded together. The tribunes refused to allow the ordinary business of the state to go on until their terms were accepted, and in 367 it was enacted that one of the consuls in each year must be of plebeian family. It would be hard to imagine a more drastic political change than this, which may be compared to the British Reform Bill of 1832: it admitted a new principle, that no hereditary privilege should stand between any citizen and the highest office in the state.

From this time onward, the development of the magistracy proceeds in a new line. Once and again the patricians attempted to deprive their great concession of its value by creating new offices to perform some of the functions of the consuls—*e.g.* the praetorship (see Chap. I)—which were to be open to patricians only: but the plebeians forced their way into these also, once they had access to the consulship. The first plebeian dictator was elected in 356, the first plebeian censor in 351, and the first plebeian praetor in 336. From the latter part of the fourth century B.C. the two orders were thoroughly equal as regards

the magistracy, and the plebeians had the further advantage that no patrician could be elected tribune of the *plebs*.

It must not be imagined, however, that Rome was now transformed into a paradise for the common man. Many of the plebeian families became as wealthy and famous as any of the old patrician houses. The division between rich and poor continued to exist, though there was no longer any hard distinction of political privilege. Only the wealthier men, whether of patrician or of plebeian family, could afford to serve the state in the magistracies: the Assemblies naturally fell into the habit of electing members of such families, and thus there grew up a new nobility, a group of families which from generation to generation had their sons chosen magistrates. In place of the old custom, by which only patricians might be elected, there developed a new one, by which the offices of the state must be held in a certain order, so that to attain the consulship a man must serve his political apprenticeship in the lower magistracies. Thus there came into existence a new governing class, and the force which directed it, the brain where its policy was conceived, was the Senate. Even the tribunes, who had been created to champion the cause of the oppressed masses, became themselves the instruments of the governing class. For no tribune could act against the veto of one of his colleagues, and among the ten there was usually at least one on whom the Senate could rely to stop any violent revolutionary proceedings on the part of one of the others. Nor, again, could any of the regular magistrates afford to take a line of his own: the Senate could bring to bear on him the organised opinion of the governing class, and, if he proved self-willed, it could call him to order by means of a tribune. The Senate, in fact, was the force which bound the Roman constitution together, bringing the plebeian officers into line and co-operation with the other parts. Thus united, the Roman state became a powerful engine of conquest.

III

ROME AND THE ITALIANS

THE centuries which witnessed the gradual settlement of the Roman constitution within, were also occupied by a long

process of expansion without, by which Rome became the mistress of middle Italy. Her citizens might have divisions and conflicts among themselves, but they always presented a solid front to their enemies and rivals. It was, indeed, in virtue of her superior unity that she was able to attain supremacy over her more numerous but less united neighbours. From beginning to end her story is one of almost continuous warfare, and in these early wars, Rome first developed her characteristic methods of holding a conquered country by fortresses and roads, and her policy of assimilating conquered peoples to herself, so that her strength grew with the extension of her territories. Much of the detail in the narratives of fighting which have come down to us from these centuries is no doubt unhistorical. But the landmarks of Roman progress remained in the fortress-colonies and the military roads, and in the system of alliances through which the Roman headship of Italy was maintained. In this chapter I shall endeavour to point out the chief of these landmarks, and to use them as guides in putting the story together.

The early wars of Rome may be divided into two periods :

(a) The establishment of Roman supremacy over the Latin plain and the neighbouring uplands to the east and south ; the conquest of southern Etruria ; and the repulse of the Gaulish invasion from beyond the Apennines. This period closes about 330 B.C. (b) The wars with the Samnite tribes, first in Campania and then in the mountain-districts of the central Apennines ; followed by the Roman advance beyond the mountains into the country of the Gauls to the north. This is complete about 284 B.C. Then, as a kind of epilogue to this part of the story, comes (c) the war with Pyrrhus of Epirus, in which the Roman command of Italy was put to the test of repelling an invasion from overseas—a test from which Rome emerged as the acknowledged leader of the Italian peoples, and one of the “great powers” of the Mediterranean world.

(a) The career of Rome during these wars was by no means one of uninterrupted victory, though in the Roman tales the occasional checks, defeats, and disasters are often disguised. But on the whole there was a steady progress. Two different methods were applied by the government in dealing with conquered communities. Some, and especially those in the nearer

neighbourhood of the city itself, were incorporated in Rome: their inhabitants, that is, became members of the Roman state, and the city of Rome became the central fortress, the seat of government, and the chief market-town for their whole district. Others continued to be separate communities, but were brought into alliance with Rome on such terms that they were bound to follow her leadership in war and in foreign policy. This latter method was applied first to the cities of the Latins, which formed a group or league by themselves. The Roman government dealt with the Latin League as a whole until about the middle of the fourth century (338), when the bond was dissolved and each city was related to Rome by a separate treaty.

With Latin assistance Rome conducted a series of wars against her more distant rivals. The Etruscan cities (see Chap. I) were constant and pressing enemies on the north-west, and many stories of heroic Roman exploits are told of the long struggle against them. Shortly after the beginning of the fourth century, Veii, the chief of these cities in the south of Etruria, was taken after a long siege, and Rome became mistress of the region north and west of the lower Tiber as far as the Ciminian forest. Her armies then began to advance northward towards the valleys of the Ombrone and the Arno, when, about 391, they came in touch with a new enemy, the Gauls from the plains of the Po, beyond the Apennine.

These Gauls were tribes of the people called "Celtic" by the Greeks, which for centuries had been penetrating through the Alpine passes into Italy, and had established themselves on both sides of the Po. A race of northerners, they were known to the Italians as tall, fair, blue-eyed, red-haired warriors, terrible in attack. At the beginning of the fourth century bands of them had begun to cross the northern Apennine into Etruria, and there they came into conflict with the Roman power advancing from the south. At first the weight and terror of their attack overwhelmed the Romans, and they poured down upon Rome itself, which they took and sacked—all but the fortress on the Capitol, which, according to a famous legend, was saved from a midnight surprise by the cries of the sacred geese waking the garrison. But the Gauls, though their first onset was terrible, had not enough unity or endurance to conquer the lands which they overran. The fortified cities of

refuge in the Latin country stood like rocks above the tide, and the tide soon ebbcd. For centuries Rome was never wholly free from the apprehension of another Gaulish invasion: but her solidity and pertinacity enabled her to survive the storm, and to recover her strength very speedily after it had passed. The departure of the Gauls from Rome in 390 marks the beginning of Roman history in the strict sense: the records before that time seem to have perished in the burning of the city, but after that date we can rely with more security on the narratives of the native historians.

With the help of the Latins, again, Rome went on to subjugate the regions to the south and east, in the Volscian hills and the valley of the Liris, by which her forces gradually advanced towards the rich Campanian plains round the Bay of Naples. All through the fourth century this process was going on, with varying turns of fortune, but with a fairly steady growth of Roman power. Now and then the Latin and other allies gave trouble, demanding a greater share in the conduct of the war and in the division of gains; but always in the end the Romans overcame these difficulties, and were able to break up the organisations of their neighbours, in virtue partly of their own superior unity among themselves—which was consolidated by the measures passed in 367—partly of their favourable central position on the Tiber.

The new conquests were in every case secured by the plantation of fortress *colonies*. Some of these were outposts of Roman citizens, placed on or near the coast, such as Ostia at the Tiber-mouth, and Antium and Terracina on the Latin seaboard farther south. These settlements constituted, as it were, bits of Rome cut off and planted out: the colonists remained members of the Roman state, holding lands in the colony's territory with votes in the Roman Assemblies, and giving their military service, not in the annual levy but as standing garrisons in a conquered country. Others of the new fortress-towns were called Latin colonies: they were not parts of the Roman state, but new communities, recruited both from Rome and from cities of the Latin League, and joined to Rome each by a separate treaty of alliance. The Latin colonies were mostly planted inland, to guard the lines of communication and keep the surrounding district in order.

Such towns were Signia on the slopes of the Volscian hills; Sutrium in southern Etruria; Fregellae in the valley of the Liris, on the way to Campania. By about 330 Rome had established her control over the lowlands west of the Apennine, in a region about 100 or 120 miles along the coast and some 40 or 50 inland.

(b) As the Romans advanced their power towards the borders of Campania they began to come into conflict with the Samnite peoples, and thus entered upon a new chapter of their history. The quarrel was one between lowlanders, living a settled agricultural life, engaging in trade, and resorting to towns for business and politics, and highlanders of the central mountain-ridge of Italy, hardy pastoral tribes, less highly developed and organised, making their raids upon the wealthier people of the plain. Many of the Samnites had in earlier centuries descended into the Campanian lowland: they had overpowered the older communities, some Etruscan, such as Capua, some colonies from Greece, such as Cumae, and they had settled down to the regular lowland life. Now, in the fourth century, the peoples of the hills were again on the move, southward along the central ranges, and south-westward into the plains. Thus Rome, being the most powerful of the lowland states, was called upon to resist these hill-peoples, and found herself embroiled in the first of the long series of Samnite wars, which began about 343. These wars continued at intervals till about 290, and for forty years of that time the conflict was close and desperate. It centred largely about the establishment and maintenance of the Roman communications, and in this period the first lines of the Roman road-system were laid down, which was continually developed and perfected in later times. The first of these roads, the Appian Way, was built about 312, through the Latin plain near the coast to Terracina, and thence along the seaboard to the Liris and Volturnus, and inland to Capua. An alternative route to Campania was secured by the Latin Way, following the valleys of the Tolerus and the Liris behind the Volscian hills. Later, the Valerian Way was built, eastwards from Rome to the Fucine Lake in the heart of the Apennines, and thence to the head of the Aternus, leading down to the Adriatic; the Flaminian, up the Tiber valley to

Narnia, and northwards through Umbria, to reach the country of the Gauls and the coast at Ariminum; the Cassian through Etruria to Arretium, and afterwards across the Apennines to the Lombard plain at Bononia. (The system, of course, was slowly developed: only its beginnings belonged to the age of the Samnite wars.) Along with the road-building, and part of the same plan, went the foundation of more and more Latin fortress-colonies, some fifteen of which were planted in this period—for instance Luceria in the Apulian country, in the rear of the Samnites; Narnia, commanding southern Umbria; Venusia, a great stronghold on the south-eastern flank of the Samnite country; Hatria, the first colony planted on the farther slope of the Apennines; and finally Beneventum, in the very heart of Samnium itself, marking the conclusion of the war.

The stories of the fighting told by the Roman historians are confused and scattered, but they suffice to prove its severity. The enemy were loosely organised, and often slow to combine; but their courage and military skill were great, and the Romans learned much from them in the art of warfare—especially of making an army flexible and fitted to operate in broken hill-country.

In the course of the war, Rome was threatened in flank and rear by a rebellion in Etruria and among some of her nearer allies; and in its final stage the Samnites endeavoured to form a coalition with all the peoples of middle and north Italy—Etruscans, Umbrians, and even the Gauls of south Lombardy. The tribes of Apulia and Lucania, however, held aloof. The last battles, therefore, were fought mostly in the north, culminating in the great Roman victory at Sentinum in Umbria (295), when the Roman general Decius sacrificed his life to turn the favour of the gods to the Roman side. After this the coalition fell to pieces before the united strength of the Roman alliance. When peace was finally attained Rome had planted her outposts far and wide, penetrating even into the Gaulish territory on the northern Adriatic coast.

(c) She was next called upon to fight for Italy against a foreign invader, and was thus brought into the main current of international Mediterranean politics. Half a century earlier Alexander the Great had died at Babylon, leaving his newly

won empire, which extended from the Ionian Sea to the Indus, to be fought over and dismembered by his generals. His marvellous twelve years of conquest had changed the face of the world, and his example inspired, or demoralised, his contemporaries with new ideas of dominion. After a generation of confused fighting, during which great soldiers played for kingdoms, the eastern lands of the Mediterranean were beginning to settle down under a group of new dynasties founded by Alexander's officers in Egypt, Syria, and Macedonia; but in the last instance the settlement was not yet attained. Among the lesser kings of the Balkan region was Pyrrhus of Epirus. He had made a bold stroke for the Macedonian throne, but had been driven from it, and was now looking for a new field of adventure.

Of the numerous Greek colonies in the south of Italy, Tarentum was the most prosperous. It had hitherto been on friendly terms with Rome, but now that the Samnites were overcome, the Tarentines became alarmed, picked a quarrel with the Romans, and appealed to Pyrrhus for help. Though not himself a Greek, he belonged to the same Greek world as they, and they held out to him the prospect of making himself a new empire by joining southern Italy to his own Epirus. Pyrrhus accepted the invitation, transported some troops to Italy, and defeated the Romans in a couple of bloody engagements in 280 and 279, in which for the first time the legions were confronted by the famous Macedonian phalanx, and by the unknown and terrifying war-elephants. But though Pyrrhus might win battles, he could not end the campaign. The Senate refused to treat with his envoys so long as his troops remained on Italian soil—thus proclaiming what may be called the Roman "Monroe doctrine." He found that he was dealing, not with a group of disunited states, but with a nation: such had been the fruits of Roman methods in Italy. He next tried Sicily, where he won some brilliant successes at first, but failed to hold them; and then, returning to Italy, was completely defeated at Beneventum in 275, and gave up the adventure. East of the Adriatic he might still hope that fortune would throw him a kingdom: but in Italy the power of Rome had been so patiently and well founded that there was no scope for adventurers. The result of the war was that the Romans still further secured

their hold of the south, planting several new garrisons, the chief of which was the new port of Brundisium, to which the Appian Way was carried through the Samnite mountains.

IV

THE PUNIC WARS AND THE CONQUEST OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN

THE century and a half which followed the defeat of Pyrrhus was filled with events which entirely changed the current of Roman history. Rome had become the leader of a confederacy of Italian states south of the Apennine range, but had as yet had little or no dealings either with the regions to the north, up to and beyond the Alps, or with peoples across the sea in the Balkan peninsula, Africa, Spain, and the larger islands of the Mediterranean. The attack of Pyrrhus had brought her for the first time into direct relation with the Greek lands to the east: but the natural outlook of Italy is rather towards the west and the south, and the first great wars of Rome beyond Italy were fought in this direction, against the great oriental and naval power of Carthage, and first for the mastery of Sicily.

Carthage, situated near the site of modern Tunis on the African coast, had been founded about the ninth century B.C. as a colony of Phœnician (or Punic) traders from Sidon and Tyre, and had grown to be a great city. Its character and government were in many ways comparable to those of Venice in the later Middle Ages. Its wars were fought mainly by hired mercenaries from Spain and Italy and the native African races, and the Carthaginians themselves were chiefly devoted to merchandise: but they had made repeated attempts to establish an empire in Sicily. They already held a considerable district in the western end of the island, while in the east the Greek settlements had hitherto maintained their freedom against Carthage, though with many struggles and fluctuations of fortune. Now the disorder, disunion, and weakness of the Greeks caused by the Sicilian adventure of Pyrrhus gave Carthage a fresh opportunity to bring the whole island under her

control. Such an issue could not be regarded with equanimity by Rome, for the near neighbourhood of a strong and alien power in Sicily would be dangerous to the Roman leadership in Italy. The immediate occasion for hostilities, which arose out of the relations between two of the Greek towns in the west, Messana and Syracuse, need not be discussed here. Suffice it to say that about 263 Rome found herself in grips with Carthage, and compelled to fight on what was, for her, practically a new element: for the war must be waged by sea as well as on Sicilian soil.

The First Punic War lasted from 263 to 241. During its course, the Roman government had for the first time to build and equip considerable fleets of war-galleys, a task which was reluctantly and often clumsily undertaken, for the Romans, unlike the Greeks, were no sailors. When their fleets, encouraged by some unexpected successes, began to venture farther overseas, and even to land troops on the African coast, their unhandy seamanship led to serious losses by storm. More than once the government had to replace its shattered squadrons by building new ones, and the drain on men and treasure was very heavy. Meanwhile, on land in Sicily, the war dragged on with varying fortune, now a Roman capture of one of the Punic strongholds, now a severe repulse. In the later stages, a new Carthaginian general, Hamilcar, conducted a brilliant series of surprise attacks in the western end of Sicily. Both sides were hard put to it to keep up the struggle, but the Romans held grimly to their task of besieging the western fortresses, and at last, in 241, when the supply-fleet from Africa was caught unawares and destroyed by the Roman admiral Catulus off the Aegates islands, Carthage gave in. By the treaty of peace, she was to relinquish her claims to Sicily and pay a heavy indemnity. Rome divided Sicily with the Greek King of Syracuse, and thus acquired the first of her "provinces" or dominions beyond Italy. In what method she arranged for their administration we shall see in the next chapter.

Rome had some twenty years' respite from the hostility of Carthage, and this was mainly employed in consolidating her control of the islands—Sardinia and Corsica being annexed as a second province—and in further extension of her power north

of the Apennines. The Punic war had caused much distress and impoverishment, and to relieve this, the champions of the poor called for the allotment of new lands on the northern seaboard of the Adriatic, in Picenum and Umbria. The plantation of these settlements led to trouble with the Gauls in the plains of the Po, and in 225 a new Gaulish war broke out, against which the full levy of Roman Italy was set in preparation. Rome could now draw upon some 700,000 or 800,000 men, of whom over 200,000 were actually mobilised. The general result of the war was to extend the Roman sphere to the natural frontier of Italy, the Alps. It was at this time that the great Flaminian Way was built from Rome to Ariminum, and Latin fortress-colonies were planted to guard the fords of the Po at Placentia and Cremona. A great new district, the Cisalpine Gaul, was thus annexed to the Roman dominion: but the Gaulish tribes were as yet very far from acquiescing in the conquest, as was proved when Hannibal came.

For the struggle between Rome and Carthage was not yet ended. Under the guidance of Hamilcar, the Carthaginians set out to repair their loss of the islands by opening up a new empire in Spain. New Carthage was founded on the east coast as an arsenal and base of supplies, which directly threatened Roman control of the seas to the west of Italy: and the hardy Spanish tribes were to furnish a new army. For twenty years a succession of Punic generals laboured at the work of preparing vengeance on Rome, while the Senate, busy with its work in north Italy, could do no more than make alliances with a few of the Greek or half-Greek towns on the Gulf of Genoa and in the region of the Ebro, and stipulate that Carthage should not advance north of that river.

At last, in 221, Hannibal, Hamilcar's youngest son, came to complete his father's work. His plan was to invade Italy by land—since Rome still commanded the seas—and therefore he flung his army at Saguntum, nearest of the Roman allies, took it, and before the Senate had realised its danger, was already over the Ebro and advancing to the Rhone. There he evaded the Roman general who was sent, too late, to check him, marched inland, and made for the western passes of the Alps. In the late autumn of 219 he crossed through the early snows, probably by the lesser St. Bernard, and arrived

in Italy. Of some 46,000 men with whom he left the Rhone, he now had about 26,000 remaining—such had been the rigours of that tremendous march. His hope was to raise the Gauls, still restive under the Roman yoke, and march south to detach the Italian Allies from their allegiance to Rome.

It was a war of one man against a nation. Hannibal's army was composed of Spaniards and Africans, professional soldiers under Carthaginian officers: to these were opposed the yeomen militia of Italy, half-trained, and led by inexperienced generals. Hannibal was far from his base of supplies, with a Roman army in Spain between him and reinforcements: the government of Carthage gave him but half-hearted support, and never seriously attempted to open communications with him by sea. But for long it seemed as if the bold stroke were to succeed.

The Hannibalian or Second Punic War divides itself into certain clearly defined periods, which may be briefly summarised. (a) 219-216.—A series of great Roman disasters, as Hannibal met and broke one after another of the armies sent against him; twice in the valley of the Po, at its tributaries the Ticinus and the Trebia; once in north Etruria, after crossing the Apennine, at the Trasimene Lake, where the Romans were surprised and cut to pieces in a mist; and then, when Hannibal, avoiding Rome itself, recrossed the Apennine, at Cannae in Apulia, near the Adriatic coast, where 80,000 Roman troops were drawn into a death-trap by a yielding of Hannibal's centre. For these disasters the foolhardiness of the Roman consuls was chiefly to blame. Each held his command for a year only, and was anxious to win some striking success before the year was out, and might even be unwilling to co-operate with his colleagues: whereas Hannibal was in sole command of his force, and played with these unskilled soldiers almost at his will. Still, some signs were left to show the strength of Rome. The fortress-colonies held out—Hannibal could ill spare time for sieges: the Italian Allies of Rome disappointed him by holding to their allegiance: the supports he had raised from the Gaulish tribes were keener on plunder than on discipline: above all, the Roman people, with the Senate at its head, refused to admit defeat.

(b) 216-208.—The Roman generals began to learn their

lesson—not to risk great engagements but to wear down the enemy by hanging on his flanks. Such was the plan of the great Fabius, surnamed “the Delayer,” whose tactics have become proverbial. After Cannae, therefore, there are few pitched battles, and the war in Italy consists of scattered fighting in many districts by small and detached Roman armies. At the same time, the strain on their loyalty began to tell on the Allies, chiefly in the south, and here and there some of their cities went over to the enemy: but the Latin states held out to the end, though some of them showed signs of refusing to send their contingents to the army. The chief of the deserting cities were Capua and Tarentum, and much of the war in this period centres round the efforts of the Romans to recapture, and of Hannibal to protect these. Meanwhile, in Spain, whence the invader must look for support, a Roman army under the brothers Publius and Gnaeus Scipio, and afterwards the son of Publius, was holding back Hasdrubal, Hannibal’s brother, from sending reinforcements: and in Sicily, a new danger threatened Rome, when her old and faithful ally Syracuse declared for Carthage, and thus compelled her to fight for her new dominion over again. Further, there were signs of an understanding between Hannibal and the King of Macedon, which might mean a new invasion of Italy from the east. But this danger was averted by the exploits of a Roman fleet in the Adriatic, and by skilful diplomacy. Capua and Syracuse were both retaken by the Romans in 212: Tarentum held out till 208. But time began to tell: no reinforcements could be thrown into Italy, and when at last they came, it was to disaster.

(c) 208–202.—The tide turned decidedly in 208, with the last great battle in Italy. Hasdrubal in 209 had at last succeeded in evading young Publius Scipio, marched across Spain to the west end of the Pyrenees, and entered Gaul with some 50,000 men. Next year he crossed the Alps, and it seemed that he would succeed in joining forces with his brother, who was then in Apulia. One consul, Livius, was at Ariminum: the other, Nero, lay watching Hannibal’s movements in the south. When the news came, Nero, leaving his camp with a body of picked troops, made for his colleague’s army in a forced march night and day, and joined forces with Livius on the

morning of the sixth day. The two attacked Hasarubal as he was looking for a ford over the river Metaurus, and cut his force to pieces. It was the beginning of the end. For four years more Hannibal held on in Italy: but in Spain Scipio steadily drove the Carthaginians southward, and at last, in 202, carried the war into Africa. Hannibal, summoned home to defend Carthage, slipped across with the remnant of his army, and took command in Africa. The two great generals met for the last struggle, at Zama, south-west of Carthage, and Scipio was victorious. Carthage was brought to a peace, the terms of which took from her all her territories beyond Africa, her war-fleet, and her power of independent action, and imposed an indemnity of ten thousand talents, to be paid in instalments for fifty years—*i.e.* she became in effect a tributary of Rome.

The Punic Wars had very deep effects on the whole life of Rome and Italy. The control exercised by the Senate and the ascendancy of the new senatorial nobility (see the end of Chap. II) were consolidated. In the early years of the second war there had been signs of popular restiveness, the Assemblies, through some of the tribunes, claiming to dictate the policy of the state: but this movement had been discredited by the military failures of these popular leaders, and the Senate gained high and deserved credit for its tenacity and firmness during the darkest times of Hannibal's invasion. Italy was severely exhausted in population and agriculture, especially in the south, where the Punic occupation had been longest. Much land had gone to fallow owing to the prolonged absences of the farmers in the fighting-line. To supply bread the government had to resort to purchasing grain from abroad, especially from Sicily and Egypt, and selling it below cost price in Rome—a practice which made it increasingly difficult to restore corn-growing in Italy. The great demand for supplies of all kinds for the armies gave increased importance to the class of public contractors, who acquired a new political influence (see the next chapter). Further, there came a marked change in the relations between Rome and her Italian Allies. Some of the latter had deserted to Hannibal, and after the war was over, they were punished with a diminution of their treaty-privileges, and also with loss of lands. Some of these were assigned to new Roman colonies, twelve of which, mostly

in the south, were planted in the twenty years after Zama : others were taken up by wealthy senators, who laid them under pasture, and employed increasing numbers of slave-herdsmen. Thus was begun a process which tended to denude Italy of its free yeomen population, and create new and dangerous social problems. In the early years of the second century we hear of repeated acts of brigandage by these wild shepherds and cowboys, which sometimes grew into serious wars. The yeomen, on the other hand, began to drift into Rome, where living was cheap ; and employment was found for them in the wars of conquest overseas on which the government was now led to enter.

The story of these conquests must be very briefly told. Within about seventy years from the battle of Zama, five new "provinces" had been added to those of the islands : the two great peninsulas west and east of Italy, the region about Carthage, the western portion of Asia Minor, all became Roman dependencies, and, in turn, compelled their mistress to face new problems, the pressure of which, in the end, proved too much for the republican government. Taking the regions in geographical order, we may summarise the events as follows :

(a) In Italy north of the Apennines, the conquest of Cisalpine Gaul and of Liguria (the mountain-region at the head of the Gulf of Genoa) continued to occupy the Roman government at intervals down to the middle of the second century. These districts were treated as a kind of annexe to Italy proper, under the direct supervision of the consuls. Some of the Ligurian tribes were transported to settlements in central and southern Italy, and their country was secured in the usual way by roads and colonies, as was also the Gaulish region up to the Alps. The building of the Postumian Ways, one from Genoa to Dertona through the Ligurian hills, the other from Cremona through the Transpadane region by Verona to Aquileia ; the Aemilian Way from Ariminum by Bononia, Mutina, and Parma to Placentia ; the Cassian, continued from Arretium by Florentia across the Apennines to Bononia ; and the plantation of Latin or Roman colonies at most of these towns, mark the stages of the process.

(b) In Spain, which passed from Carthage to Rome after the second Punic war, the Romans were engaged for nearly two

centuries in completing their conquest, a task rendered difficult by the geography of the country and by the restless and warlike character of the inhabitants. Two districts were created, each having a Roman governor and a Roman army—the east coasts, with the valley of the Ebro, and the southern and south-western parts, the regions of the Guadalquivir, Guadiana, and Tagus. The west and north-west were not subjugated till the time of Augustus.

(c) The chief energies of the state, however, were now directed to the east. In the second Punic war, as we have seen, Philip V, King of Macedon, had taken sides with Hannibal, though he gave him no effective assistance; and the Senate now turned to make war upon Philip. They succeeded in detaching from his alliance several of the lesser states in the Greek lands, and interfered at first to liberate the Greeks from his control—not as yet to annex his territories to Rome. By the war of 200–196 Philip was compelled to evacuate Greece, and the cities were proclaimed free by the Roman general Flamininus. But they soon fell to quarrelling among themselves, and some of them called in Antiochus of Syria, the next great power on the east, to drive out the Romans. Rome was thus drawn farther and farther east. She ejected the Syrian invaders from Greece in 191, and carried the war across the Aegean into Asia Minor, where, as in Greece, she supported the lesser states, such as Pergamum and Rhodes, against Antiochus, and compelled him to withdraw his power behind the Taurus mountains. Thus was established a kind of Roman “protectorate” of the Greek lands—a system of separate alliances with states of various size, enjoying various degrees of independence. Rome, in short, was now applying to a wider area the methods which she had first employed among her near neighbours in Latium.

The protectorate, however, was speedily transformed into an Empire. The states of the Greek world were weak and degenerate, unfit to exercise liberty, while Rome was yearly growing stronger and more arrogant. And the rapid extension of Roman commercial and financial enterprise in the eastern countries furnished opportunities for repeated interference, and finally for annexation: “the flag followed trade.” The main

stages of the process were as follows: (i) A renewal of war with Macedon, and the deposition of its King Perseus in 168. Macedon was not annexed, but disarmed and divided into four separate republics, paying tribute to Rome: and at the same time Roman relations with the Greek states in the Aegean area were revised. Rome's policy became much less lenient and generous, and her allies found themselves weaker, now that her own position was secure. (ii) A Macedonian rebellion, followed by annexation, and the creation of the Roman "province" of Macedonia, secured by the building of the Egnatian Way from the Adriatic to the Aegean. Shortly after, renewed disorders in Greece led to the subjugation of the Greek cities and the dissolution of their Leagues. They were not definitely annexed, but were placed under the control of the new governor of Macedonia (146).

(d) Similarly in western Asia Minor, where Pergamum, the most important state, was at first strengthened by large accessions of territory, and then weakened, until in 133 its last king, Attalus III, at his death bequeathed his kingdom to the Roman People, his patrons and oppressors. It was taken over as the province of Asia, and became a rich field for exploitation by the Roman financiers.

(e) In Africa, a war between Carthage and the neighbouring native state of Numidia gave the Romans an excuse to intervene. They took vengeance on their ancient enemy by razing Carthage to the ground, and took over its territory as the province of Africa in 146. Egypt, meanwhile, weakened by the aggressions of the kings of Macedon and Syria, had sought Roman protection. The dynasty of the Ptolemies—descended from one of Alexander's marshals—became subject allies of Rome in 168. Their land was not annexed, but their policy was under Roman supervision.

V

THE REPUBLIC AND ITS PROVINCES

THE results of the century of conquest which has been briefly summarised in the previous chapter may be set down under three heads: the effect on the Roman machine of government, the effect on public and international economics and finance, and the effect on the condition and character of the Roman people. These are simply three aspects of a historical process which is single and connected throughout.

(i) *Structure of the Provincial System.*—The Roman word “province” means an administrative department or set of duties assigned to a magistrate, in which he acts in virtue of his magisterial powers (see Chap. I). It comes to be applied, in particular, to the administration of a district of subject territory, or a group of subject communities, outside Italy. The conquests of such territories and communities, in the period following the First Punic War, led to the creation of a number of these provincial commands, to each of which a Roman governor was appointed: Sicily, and Sardinia with Corsica, in 227; the two provinces of Hither and Further Spain, in 197; Macedonia, in 148; Africa, in 146; and Asia, in 133. To these, during the revolution-period, were added Transalpine or Narbonese Gaul, about 121; Cilicia, in 103; Bithynia and Cyrene in 74; Crete in 67; Syria in 62; Cyprus in 58; and in 82 the Cisalpine Gaul was separated from the control of the consuls, and erected into a regular provincial command. Thus when Caesar was made governor of the two Gauls in 58, there were fifteen provinces included in the list: their respective boundaries were changed from time to time, and sometimes more than one, as in the instance named, might be placed under a single command.

The possession of these territories presented the Roman state with a new set of problems in government. A machinery had to be constructed through which its authority could be brought to bear upon them, and the method chosen was to adapt the

Roman magisterial system for the purpose. At first a number of new magistrates were created, called praetors: like the praetors already existing, they had the *imperium*, which empowered them to command an army. But the praetors at Rome were dealing with Roman citizens according to Roman law: the praetors in the provinces were dealing with subjects who had no right to the Roman law, and, in particular, were not entitled to the privilege of appeal or to the protection of a tribune. Thus the provincial governor was in an anomalous position. He was acting in virtue of powers voted to him by the Roman People, and using them upon persons and communities who had no legal means of checking his action; his commands were in the last resort enforced by his Roman troops. He was a magistrate of the City of Rome, but free from the limitations of such magistracy, except that his command was granted for a definite period, usually for one year.

Later, a modification of this practice was adopted—the method of *prorogation*. As the volume and complexity of magisterial business at Rome increased, the praetors were all engaged in the city during their year of office, mostly with work as judges: and at its end, their *imperium* was “pro-rogued” or extended, without re-election, and each was sent by the Senate to govern a province for a year. In this case, they were called “pro-praetors.” Similarly, it became usual for the consuls as well to be appointed to provinces after their year of office, with the rank of “pro-consuls.” Most of the actual fighting was now confined to the lands beyond Italy, and thus the promagistrates became in fact the principal generals. The consuls and praetors at Rome always retained the capacity, if need were, to take command of an army: their military powers for the most part were dormant, but in the case of a serious war, one or both of the consuls might be sent to take command abroad.

The powers of the provincial governor, whether praetor, pro-praetor, or proconsul, were very wide. He was at once military commandant, chief of the administration, and supreme judge—a combination of functions requiring an extraordinary combination of qualities. He had under him a quaestor, elected by the Assembly at Rome, and assigned to the province by the Senate,

who acted as paymaster and general assistant; and also a staff of military officers, appointed by the Senate on the governor's recommendation, who exercised powers delegated to them by him, and were responsible to him. He was also accompanied by a number of young nobles, called his "companions," who were entering on the business of public life under his direction.

The province consisted of a number of native communities. A few of these might have special privileges based on treaties—exemption from taxation and quartering of troops, and the use of their own laws and customs free from the governor's interference. The rest were under his control, but for the most part Rome refrained from setting up any comprehensive system of direct administration, and allowed them to go on in their own methods of local government, subject to the payment of tribute—which was mostly levied on the produce of the soil—and of some indirect taxes or customs. The governor or his legates heard and judged the more important law-cases, especially of crime, and from his judgment, in which he might be assisted by a jury of Romans, there was no appeal. The province was divided into circuits, and the governor visited these in turn to despatch the business brought before him. As a Roman magistrate administering Roman law, he was not bound to conform to the rules of the native law out of which arose the cases which he had to decide: and thus each governor made for himself a set of legal rules, which he published as an "edict" when he came into office. The edict would be based largely on the act of the Roman Assembly which created the province, and also on the edicts of his predecessors in the governorship. But it was not a *code*: its rules held only during its author's term of office.

(ii) *Finance and Economics*.—The Roman republic never created for itself any adequate public machinery for collecting its revenues. The magistrates appointed by the Assemblies were engaged in military and judicial work, *i.e.* in the *spending* of revenue. The *raising* of revenue was left very largely to private enterprise, by the method of contracting or tax-farming. Every five years the censors at Rome sold the right of collecting the provincial tributes, tithes, and customs

to private speculators, individuals or syndicates, who paid a lump sum to the government and then proceeded to recover their money by exacting it from the provinces, where they were entitled to help from the governors' troops. These contractors were called "publicans," and their class naturally became very influential in Roman politics. By this means the state saved expense and delay in getting in its revenues, and avoided the necessity of creating a regular financial service for the provinces. But the element of private profit, thus introduced into provincial administration, had very evil effects. The provincials were mercilessly bled to increase the publicans' profits, their agents seeking to make the taxes produce more than had been paid to the state for the contract. In provinces where the tribute was a tithe of the year's produce, instead of a fixed sum, extortion was particularly easy, since the estimates of produce could be greatly exaggerated. Again, the publicans, who were doing what was really government-work, could exercise a great influence on the policy of the governor: if he attempted to restrict their extortions, they would use their influence against him at Rome. The effects of this on Roman politics will be more fully discussed in the next chapter.

Again, as has been stated, the provinces furnished a field for Roman private enterprise. The same class of Roman financiers who took up the state-contracts were also engaged in the exploitation of trade. In particular, the business of banking and money-lending was developed by them: they made loans at high rates of interest to provincial communities and individuals, and then called in the help of Roman troops to enforce payment. Also, a great deal of land in the provinces, especially in Africa and Sicily, was taken up by Roman capitalists, and exploited by means of slave-labour. This practice tended to diminish and degrade the free populations of the provinces.

During the wars of conquest great numbers of prisoners were taken, and these, according to the usual practice of ancient warfare, were sold as part of the booty. Italy was filled with slaves, and the supply was maintained and increased by the growth of a regular slave-trade, fed by kid-

napping, especially in the countries of Asia Minor. Thus methods of capitalistic production, in which slaves played the part of machinery, were rapidly developed. Free labour was driven out of employment into destitution, and at the same time enormous fortunes began to appear in Roman society.

The great masses of booty, and especially of the precious metals, which poured into Italy during the wars, raised the standards of living among the wealthy classes, promoted luxury, and created an abnormal money-market. Italy was not paying for these imports by any corresponding increase of output—there was no large development of manufactures. Thus Italy, and especially Rome, came to live upon the provinces: the conquering state became the parasite of its conquered subjects. In particular, the importation of cheap corn, much of it in the form of tribute, made it increasingly difficult for the small cultivators of Italy to live, and their lands were bought up by wealthy speculators to be thrown into pasture, or, in the regions near Rome, into pleasure-grounds.

The chief business left to the commons of Rome was fighting, and the provinces required armies of occupation. Thus there grew up a long-service system, a profession of arms, instead of the old militia of citizen-soldiers. The discharged soldier, coming back from service, could not easily resume his peaceful occupation: he naturally tended to remain in Rome, living on the cheap corn provided by the state, and creating a new problem of government in the shape of an idle, unproductive, and restless city-populace, which claimed to represent the Roman people in the Assemblies. And a new way of living was discovered: the poor man's vote acquired a money-value.

(iii) *Moral and Social Effects.*—The material expansion of the Roman power was too rapid to permit a proper corresponding readjustment of its intellectual and moral attitude. Hitherto, Roman society had been simple and unsophisticated; but the conquests, and the resulting inflow of new ideas and new wealth, engendered a temper of arrogance without a sense of responsibility. This appears in the Roman People as a whole, and especially in the wealthy and governing classes.

The strength and solidity of the Roman state had enabled it to conquer the older and weaker states of the Greek East: and thus the Romans felt themselves superior to other peoples, and retained for their own exclusive use the benefits of their victories. The peoples of the provinces outside Italy were treated as sources of revenue and material for the aggrandisement of Rome: and within Italy, the Allies who had so largely assisted Rome in her victories found their position lowered, their privileges becoming less valuable, in proportion as the Roman citizens became more exclusive in temper, and less inclined to share their profits. In the early days of the Republic, it had been the Roman policy that the conquered Italians, now Allies of Rome, should not be hopelessly excluded from the sacred circle of the Roman citizenship. They had before them the hope that they might by loyal service attain that citizenship, the way to which was prepared for them through successive grades of privilege. Thus the member of an Allied state, whether Latin or other, had a double allegiance—first to his own little city, and secondly to Rome, of which he might one day become a citizen. But in the later period, after the Punic wars and the conquests, it became more and more difficult for him to reach that goal. The Roman citizenship was becoming more valuable—for instance, after the fall of Macedon in 168, direct taxes ceased to be paid by Romans, because of the new revenues from the provincial tributes—and thus its holders, the voters in the Roman Assemblies, refused to share it with their Italian Allies, though the latter had to serve with the armies which made and held the conquests.

In the tone of the governing classes—that new nobility the rise of which was described at the end of Chapter II—a similar change appears. During the great wars, the Senatorial Order displays a very high degree of corporate sense: the individual does not emerge from the class, personal ambitions are subordinated to public and corporate interests. But the provincial system furnished new temptations to the individual. The magistrate was sent from Rome, where as consul or praetor he had been hedged about by the checks of custom and constitution, to be absolute master of a great territory inhabited by subjects to whom his will was law. New opportunities of

wealth and power were opened, and he became aware of his own personality, so that when he went back to Rome, it was less easy for him to submit again to the restrictions of political life in the city. The earlier age of the Republic is one of a great governing *class*; its later age is marked by the appearance of great *individuals*, men of personal ambition. And besides the Senatorial Order, from which the magistrates were drawn, there grew up that new power in the community, the class of financiers, who did not seek magisterial office—and thus were not of the “nobility”—but operated upon politics from motives of private gain. How all these changes combined to produce the Revolution and Caesar, we shall see in the next chapter.

VI

THE REVOLUTION: FROM THE BROTHERS GRACCHUS TO SULLA

By “the Revolution” is here meant that series of political upheavals which occurred during the last hundred years of the Roman Republic, and which finally transformed the Republic into the Empire. It may be conveniently subdivided into two periods, ending respectively with the resignation of the Dictator Sulla in 79, and with the establishment of the Empire by Octavian, afterwards called Augustus, in 28. The matters most acutely agitated during the former of these periods are Italian and domestic: those which occupy the latter are chiefly provincial and foreign. But both aspects of the situation must be kept in view throughout.

For the Revolution, in the broadest view, was caused by the reaction of the provincial conquests upon Rome and Italy. It was the long and agonised effort of the Roman state to adjust itself to the new conditions created by these conquests, an effort made often through blundering and disaster, since even the clearest minds were only half aware of the causes of the evils which beset them. In brief summary of these causes, as they can be discerned from this long distance of time, the following points may be set down:

(i) The methods of provincial administration were such as to aggravate the evil conditions in Italy, political and economic, which had been engendered during the Punic Wars. The vast increase of wealth and opportunity demoralised the Roman governing class, both senators and financiers, and resulted in short-sighted government without any adequate sense of responsibility or of community of interest between the governing Romans and the governed people of the provinces.

(ii) In Italy itself, the Senate and the senatorial nobility had used their political position so as to protect from economic reform the new types of wealth in capital and land. Out of the conditions described in Chapters IV and V there had arisen a new agrarian problem, similar to that of the fifth and fourth centuries, but wider in extent and more complex. The new evil arose from that serious decay of the yeomen class which has already been referred to, and which was the result of a variety of causes—the decreasing profitableness of corn-growing on the old system of small, self-supporting farms; the transference of much land from tillage to pasture; the creation of large farms worked by slave-labour; the growing attractions of life in the city, which made the yeomen willing to sell their lands, and the great increase of wealth in the governing class, which made the nobles ready to buy. These evils, of course, were not universal. Depopulation was worst in Latium, Etruria, Lucania, and Apulia, less acute in the Apennine regions, and comparatively slight in Cisalpine Gaul. In general, the lands of the Allies were not yet severely affected: it was not till the Social War and the subsequent clearances that they suffered.

In particular, the treatment of the *public lands* created a special problem. Now, as formerly (see Chapter II), the lands acquired by the state in Italy, in so far as they were not used for the plantation of colonies, or sold, or divided in freehold allotments, had been let out, either in separate leases, or—and these last were the most numerous cases—for “occupation.” This meant that any one who chose might take up land for tillage or for pasture, subject to a small rent or capitation. By the laws of 367, limits had been fixed to the amount of public land which any single individual might

“occupy”: but this statute had long been ignored. Further, in many cases the occupiers had been left in possession for generations, and had ceased to pay even the nominal rent. Thus much of the public land had come to be regarded as virtually owned by the occupiers. Still, it was legally state-property, and might be used for the creation of new small-holdings so as to replace the city-populace on the land.

(iii) But any reform by means of legislation was rendered still more difficult by the present character of the legislative bodies, the Assemblies at Rome. In these, only permanent residents in Rome could regularly exercise the vote, and they were the least stable body of the citizens, and the most easily influenced by corruption. Again, the Senate which controlled legislation, though it did not legislate, was drawn from a class whose interests were bound up with the existing order of things. And yet again, the Italian Allies, who shared the burden of military service with the Romans, found their rights and privileges diminishing. But, having no votes in the Roman Assemblies, and no part in the magistracies, they had no means of redress. Such could be attained only if the Roman people would admit them to the Roman franchise, and this the Roman people—*i.e.* the mob of regular voters in Rome—would not do, because an increase in the total number of votes implied a loss of value for each single vote.

Tiberius Gracchus, who was elected one of the Tribunes of the Commons in 133, was of an old plebeian house which had an honourable record of public service. He was convinced that the depopulation of rural Italy might be cured by a system of small-holdings, to be allotted to the semi-pauperised population now crowded together in Rome. He drafted a bill appointing three commissioners, with powers to search out such public lands in Italy as were “occupied” beyond the limits ordained in 367, to take these over from the occupiers—who were mostly large landowners—and allot them afresh to citizens in small-holdings, inalienable, and subject to a fixed rent payable to the Treasury. The principle of the scheme was excellent, but by itself it could not resuscitate Italian agriculture, and it was full of difficulties under the existing conditions. It disturbed the whole

position of land-tenure: the public ownership of these lands was admitted, or could be proved, but that ownership had been allowed to remain inoperative for generations, and to resume it all at once raised a forest of thorny questions-at-law. Again, the bill in many cases applied to lands occupied by members of Allied states as well as by citizens: these were in danger of eviction, but, not being citizens, they received no compensation and could have no share in the new allotments. Lastly, the bill was at once opposed by the Senate, many members of which were among the largest "occupiers," and these easily procured another tribune to veto it when it was presented in the Commons' Assembly by Gracchus. This made it legally impossible for him to proceed. Gracchus, being convinced that his scheme was the only remedy for the evil, declared that his colleague, by so thwarting the true interest of the Commons, had ceased to be a tribune, and that his veto was therefore invalid—a most dangerous line of argument. By this means the bill was passed, and the Commissioners, of whom Gracchus was one, were appointed and set to work. The cry of "Back to the land" had caught the taste of the Roman voters for the time being. But the business was long and complicated, and the opposition, having failed to prevent the passage of the law, turned to make its operation more difficult and to take vengeance on its author. He was killed in a riot organised by his opponents after his year of office was out, and shortly afterwards the work of the Commission was stopped. It had raised the new and even more difficult question of the Allies and the franchise, and the wisest men even of the reforming spirit felt that Gracchus had been too hasty. Of these the most eminent was Scipio, grandson (by adoption) and namesake of the victor of Zama, and himself conqueror of Carthage and hero of a brilliant Spanish campaign. His military experience had shown him how vitally necessary to Rome was the loyalty of the Italian Allies, and he now came forward to protect their interests. But any proposal to enfranchise the Allies was acutely unpopular at Rome: Scipio was assassinated, as it seems, as soon as he began to suggest such a measure. Both the

agrarian and the franchise scheme were shelved for the time. The Senate seemed to have recovered control of the state, and its reactionary majority persecuted the supporters of Gracchus by an abuse of the Senate's administrative powers. They passed a resolution authorising the consuls to proceed against the reformers for treason, and many were thus executed after a hurried trial.

But the reformers found a new leader in Gaius Gracchus, younger brother of Tiberius, and a much more adroit politician. His plan was to continue the work and avenge the death of his brother by creating a new force of opposition to the reactionary Senate. He became tribune in 123, and such was his political skill that for two years he was practically master of the state. It had recently—since the death of Tiberius—been made legal for a man to be re-elected tribune in successive years, and so long as Gracchus could keep the favour of the electors, the powers of the office would enable him to conduct, or at any rate control, the whole administration. He hoped by a series of new laws to transfer the direction of affairs from the Senate to the Assemblies, *i.e.* in effect to the *leaders* of the Assemblies, himself and his reforming colleagues.

These laws, too numerous and complex to be detailed here, altered the whole poise of Roman public life. The controlling powers of the Senate, acquired by custom and tacit usurpation, were stringently curtailed. And in order to keep his supporters together, Gracchus introduced, or confirmed and extended, certain new ideas and forces in Roman politics. Of these the most important were the two following:

(a) He passed a law providing that the corn imported as tribute from the provinces, especially Sicily, should be sold by the government in Rome, to any citizen who applied for it, at about half the normal market-rate. Cheap corn had been occasionally provided in times of scarcity: Gracchus made the practice regular and permanent. This measure might be expected to secure the support of the voters for its author's other proposals, and it might be regarded as a kind of poor relief. But it tended to aggravate those very difficulties of agriculture in Italy which Gracchus was endeavouring to diminish; it taught the Roman mob to support any politician, reformer or reactionary,

who would promise a lower rate; and it rooted still deeper the idea that the provinces existed solely for the advantage of Rome.

(b) Gracchus also passed a series of laws designed to consolidate the body of public contractors and financiers as a political force in opposition to the Senate. These men were drawn from the social class called the "Knights," or the "Equestrian Order," titles which originally implied service in the cavalry, but which had long ceased to have any military significance. They were used to describe the class of wealthy men who were not of the senatorial nobility—*i.e.* of families whose members were accustomed to seek election to the magistracies—but many of whom were in the way of taking up public contracts (see Chap. V).

The province of Asia—the former territories of the kings of Pergamum, including many wealthy trading cities on the coast of Asia Minor—had been annexed in 133, and its tribute was a fixed sum paid direct to the Treasury. Gracchus substituted the oppressive system of tithes, and ordained that the right of collecting these should be sold by auction at Rome. The province was thus handed over to be plundered by a syndicate of Roman financiers, and in return they were to use their vast influence in Gracchus' favour.

Further, Gracchus granted to the Knights the monopoly of serving as jurymen in the criminal courts. Such courts were of recent institution, and their chief business as yet was the trial of charges of misgovernment against the governors of provinces. Hitherto, only senators had served on the juries, and as the defendants were members of the Senatorial Order, the chances were in favour of acquittal. Gracchus changed the jurors' qualification to that of the Knights. Thus the governor would be tried by men who had a direct financial interest in his province: if he had used his powers to curtail their operations, he was likely to be condemned. The Equestrian Order thus acquired an effective means of controlling the provincial administration for their own profit. Under neither system, whether of equestrian or of senatorial juries, was there any regard for the interests of the provincial tax-payers: it was simply a question whether senatorial

governor or equestrian publican should be allowed to bleed them. And the administration of justice became a prize to be fought for by Roman parties.

With the support of these interests, then—the equestrian monopolists and the mob of voters, fed with cheap corn—Gracchus sought to carry forward the work of agrarian and franchise reform. He revived his brother's Land Commission, and added a new and most admirable set of proposals for the planting of new citizen-colonies. Some of these were to be in Italy, for instance at Capua and Tarentum, which before the Punic Wars had been large and flourishing centres of trade, and might become so again: in fact in this measure Gracchus seems to have aimed at reviving the urban rather than the rural life of southern Italy, and thus stopping the drift into Rome. Other colonies were to be founded in the provinces, showing that Gracchus, in spite of his cynical "deal" with the Knights about the Asian tithes, had the interests of the provinces at heart, and wished to encourage the Romans to settle abroad, not merely to live on provincial revenues. One of these schemes, the plantation of Narbo, was successfully carried out three years after Gracchus' death, when south-east Gaul became a Roman province: the others, which included the re-foundation of Carthage, were stopped by senatorial intrigues.

Further, Gracchus again took up the enfranchisement of the Italian Allies. They must be brought into the Roman citizenship if their loyalty was to be retained: and they might introduce a new and more stable element into the voting Assemblies. This, the most statesmanlike of his proposals, proved his ruin. His opponents could appeal to the cupidity of the mob, whose monopoly of the franchise was threatened: they put up another tribune to propose a new land bill, in appearance more liberal than that of Gracchus, in reality impossible, and thus diverted from him the votes on which he relied. At the end of 122 he failed to secure re-election. Attempting to resist the reaction by force, he and his friends placed themselves, as the Senate declared, beyond the pale of law. They were overpowered and murdered in the name of law and order, and for the second time the attack on the corrupt and incompetent Senate had failed. The Land-Commission, it is true, was still

at work : but before long the law was amended to allow the new small-holders to sell their lots : unused to field-labour, and unable to make their crops pay, they were soon bought out by the capitalist land-speculators, who once more threw the lands under pasture. And, since they were now the legal owners, the state could not again take back the land, or find room for new small-holdings, unless at a heavy purchase-price. Thus the result of the Gracchan laws, in the end, was the exact opposite of their author's intentions.

The chief error of the Gracchi was in their choice of a method of reform. They had endeavoured to use the Assemblies to oppose the Senate : but these were too fickle and degenerate to be an effective striking force : the Senate could be ousted only if the reformers could command the support of an army. And the events of the next few years brought the army into Roman politics.

First a war in the protectorate of Numidia was so mismanaged by the Senate that Marius, an officer who had risen from the ranks, succeeded in getting himself appointed to the command by the Assembly, superseding the Senate's nominee. And when he had brought the Numidian war to a successful issue, he found a second and supreme opportunity in a new danger which was threatening Italy itself.

This was the movement of great masses of northern tribes, called the Teutons and Cimbrians, mostly of Germanic race. They were finding their own lands in northern and middle Germany too poor for their growing numbers, and were beginning to trek southwards for better settlements. The Romans became aware as early as 113 of their movements behind the Alpine barrier, and by 109 they had entered the Rhone valley, part of which was now a Roman province. The armies sent against them were defeated once and again, till in 105 the destruction of the two consuls with their forces at Orange raised a panic in Rome. Marius was elected consul to command in the war, and during the next two years, while the Teutons turned aside into Spain, he virtually re-created the army. Hitherto the Roman legions had been recruited for each campaign from the yeomen-farmers : but the decay of this class, and the need for longer terms of service in the provinces, made

it necessary to open the legions to others. Marius enlisted citizens of all classes, and, in effect, substituted a voluntary professional soldiery for a conscript militia. Henceforward, the legions were mainly filled with landless men, to whom the service was their life-work. They looked to their generals, and to them only, for commands and rewards. The standard of discipline was raised, the numbers of the legions were increased, and the army came to feel itself a class apart. Marius also brought the corps of Italian Allies into line with the Roman legions, and cast the net of enlistment far and wide, till his force was rather cosmopolitan than Roman. During this time he was re-elected consul year after year, as the only man who could deal with the peril. In two great campaigns in 102 and 101 he shattered the hordes of the northerners when they returned to the attack on Italy. The Italians were saved, and the Armies of the Revolution were now in being.

The Senate and the nobles were discredited by their conduct in these wars, and thus the reform-party began to raise its head, and found a champion in Marius himself, backed by his immense prestige as the saviour of Italy, and by the loyalty of the new army. In 100, when he was consul for the sixth year in succession, he gave his support to a fresh series of reform-bills brought in by the tribune Saturninus: he had experienced the hostility of the nobles, who hated him as an outsider, and he had committed himself to the enfranchisement of many of the Allies who had served under him in the war. Saturninus' bills were a kind of parody of the Gracchan programme: in particular the corn-doles were to be further reduced in price, and new colonies were to be planted. They failed, however, owing to the reckless violence of their promoters: even Marius withdrew his support, and used his power as consul to put down the rioting, in which Saturninus and many of his supporters were killed.

In 91, another tribune, and a man of a nobler type, took up the cause of franchise-reform. Livius Drusus, besides attempting to legislate for new colonies and for the removal of scandals in the jury courts—for which latter proposal he won the bitter hostility of the Knights—once again proposed to admit the Allies to the citizenship. His bills were of course

rejected, and he himself was murdered: but his death was the signal for a great outbreak. The Allies, after repeated promises and disappointments, were driven to rebellion: their cities formed an Italian Federation, and proceeded to demand political equality with the Romans at the sword's point. Some of them, indeed, especially the Samnites, desired complete separation from Rome: the others would be content with the Roman franchise.

The "Social War"—*i.e.* the "War of the Allies"—lasted for two years, during which the Roman armies, moving on interior lines against the divided forces of the rebels, had the advantage on the whole. But the conflict was desperate, and the Romans found it necessary to concede what was demanded by the more moderate of the confederates. In 90 and 89 three laws were passed, the effect of which, speaking broadly, was that the whole of Italy south of the Po received the Roman franchise. These laws completely changed the character of the Roman state: it was now no longer a city-state, but a national Italian state. It remained for Rome to assimilate the new citizens into the body of the sovereign people—mainly a question of registration and distribution—and to reorganise the local government of Italy.

But from these tasks the government was now distracted by new political disturbances, arising in the first instance from the outbreak of a serious eastern war. In 88 the province of Asia was invaded by Mithridates, king of Pontus, a potentate who had been growing great in Asia Minor, and now proposed to drive out the hated Romans and recover "Asia for the Asiatics." A strong army must at once be sent to the east. Of the generals who had served with distinction in the Social War, two now became competitors for the Asian command—the veteran Marius, and Sulla, a noble of old family and a strong supporter of his order. Sulla was appointed by the Senate, whereupon Marius, as he had done in 107, got the Assembly to set aside this arrangement and elect himself. Sulla, who was already at the head of his army, marched on Rome, drove the Marian faction out of the city with great slaughter, and then, having restored the authority of the Senate, sailed for the east to deal with Mithridates, who by

this time had invaded Greece. Thus for the first time the army was used directly to turn the course of Roman politics, and used by the reactionary party.

For the next five or six years, the authority of the Roman state was curiously divided against itself. Sulla and his army had no sooner left Italy than Marius came back to Rome with his supporters and took possession of the city and the government. Members of their party were regularly elected to the magistracies, and many laws were passed against the senatorial nobility. Some measures were probably taken towards the task of registering the new citizens in the lists of voters, and organising local government: and many of the reactionary party were put out of the way. Sulla, meantime, was conducting the eastern war in practical independence of the government at home, and indeed in spite of it: he drove Mithridates out of Europe and out of the Roman territory in Asia, and went on to reorganise the finances of the province on the old pre-Gracchan basis of direct taxation. The Marian government attempted to supersede him, but their nominee was murdered and his troops mutinied. Sulla continued to act as the true Roman representative in the east, and when he had saved the Asiatic provinces for the meantime he came back to Italy in 83. His troops were absolutely devoted to him, for in the east he had been continually victorious, and had allowed his men great license in plundering. Marius was now dead, and his party had no general and no army fit to oppose Sulla, who marched on Rome and took it a second time. Within a few months Italy was at his feet; the Marians were murdered or fugitives; the Samnites, who had never been finally reduced since the Social War, were crushed, and their lands were cleared without mercy; and Sulla had himself appointed Dictator "to restore the constitution"—a position virtually of regal and absolute power.

But he declined to found a monarchy: instead, he restored the old controlling powers of the Senate, which had formerly been based on custom, by giving them a basis in written law. No bill could now be proposed to the Commons by a tribune without first being approved by the Senate: no one who had been tribune could be elected to any other magistracy. The

order in which the magistracies must be held was fixed, so that no man could by mere force and popularity make himself head of the state: the senatorial class was to govern, and there was to be no room for a Gracchus or a Marius—nor, in future, for a Sulla. A great system of criminal courts was created, in which only senators could serve as jury-men, for the trial of political offences of all sorts, and especially of treason—*i.e.* of any action directed to weaken the position of the Senate. Further, the laws about appointment to provinces were improved and made clearer: the consuls were now to be confined to the work of civil administration in Italy, leaving the proconsuls supreme in the provinces.

Having thus restored the Senate and the senatorial order to their supreme position, and having buttressed that position with laws, Sulla resigned his dictatorship and retired into private life. His followers grew rich on the confiscated estates of their exiled or slaughtered opponents: the old order, as it seemed, was restored. But Sulla had shown the way for Caesar.

VII

THE REVOLUTION : JULIUS CAESAR

IN the previous chapter, I have endeavoured to show the lines along which the revolution movement was started: the claim of the blind and selfish people of Rome to take the government out of the hands of the blind and selfish nobles; the growing scandal of provincial administration, in which senators and Knights fought for the power of spoiling the subject peoples with impunity; the increased powers and opportunities opened to the masters of the armies, and displayed in the terrible careers of Marius and Sulla; the bewildered groping of men of goodwill, like the two Gracchi and Drusus, for some way to cure the evils of Italy; the desperate adding of law to law, which left the conditions rather worse than better. The present chapter has to tell how one man of clearer sight and stronger will emerged from the crowd of politicians.

When the grim ex-dictator Sulla died in his retirement in 78, Gaius Julius Caesar was about four-and-twenty. His family connections attached him to the so-called "popular" party—it took its name from the fact that its leaders, from the Gracchi onwards, had supported the claims of the popular Assemblies to be free from the control of the Senate. Hitherto, he had been a young man-about-town, and had escaped death or loss of fortune during the dictator's rule. When after 78 his party began to reassert itself, he began to take his part in public life. But his day was not yet: for the next fifteen years the eyes of Rome were upon another figure, Caesar's contemporary, his future colleague, and at last his only rival, Gnaeus Pompeius.

Sulla's constitution began to break down almost immediately after his death. The senatorial order, despite the new laws which fortified its position, was less capable than ever of providing good government: and it had to deal with difficulties which speedily revealed its incapacity.

First in Spain: the remnants of the Marian party had found a refuge there, under the leadership of Sertorius, an able soldier and enlightened administrator, who conceived the notion of uniting the brave tribes of south-western Spain into a state and an army. He began to drill and educate the Spaniards on Roman methods, acting as though he were the rightful Roman governor. The senatorial generals failed again and again to dislodge him, and at last, in 77, Pompeius, who had served with distinction under Sulla, was appointed to command in the Spanish war: he was only twenty-seven, and had held no magisterial office, and thus his appointment was a direct breach of Sulla's laws. But the case was desperate. He conducted the war with better success till 72, when Sertorius was murdered, and the Spanish rebellion fell to pieces for want of a leader. Pompeius had thus a claim on the Senate for further promotion, which they could not ignore, and yet could not entertain without compromising their own position.

Secondly in the east: the annexation of Bithynia in 74 (see Chap. V) at the death of the last native king, caused a renewal of the war with Mithridates. Asia was again

overrun by the army of Pontus, and the consul Lucullus was sent out to take command. For a time he was brilliantly successful, and drove the invader, not only out of the Roman provinces, but beyond the Euphrates : but his advance was stayed by a mutiny among his troops, and he came into conflict with the Roman financiers in Asia, whose extortions he attempted to check. Their influence at Rome procured his recall, and within a few months Mithridates was as strong as ever.

Thirdly in Italy : Sulla's clearances had caused immense distress and discontent. He had settled many discharged troops on confiscated lands, and the soldiers, having no taste for country-life, sold their lots and came back to Rome. Thus more and more land was turned to pasture ; the slave herdsmen increased, and in 73, strengthened by bands of deserters from the training-schools of gladiators, they rose in revolt, and the government had to deal with a war of slaves, who could hope for no quarter, and therefore would give none. They terrorised south Italy for two years : at last they were put down by Crassus, praetor in 71. He had been an officer of Sulla's, but had been disgraced for corruption, and had taken to financial speculation. Though a noble by birth, he was identified with the Equestrian interest, and was the richest man in Rome.

Lastly, the seas were infested with pirates. Rome had never provided an adequate sea-police, and the wars in the Levantine regions had forced many ruined men and states to take to piracy. Rome and Italy largely depended on imported food-supply, and thus the pirates—whose strongholds were chiefly on the south coast of Asia Minor and in Crete—could reduce the capital to famine. The Senate had erected a provincial governorship in Cilicia in 103, and made one or two further attempts to put down piracy, but its admirals were corrupt and incompetent.

Thus the factions opposed to the Senate raised their heads again, in protest against its failures and scandals. They soon found leaders : in 71 Pompeius and Crassus, each at the head of a victorious army, demanded permission to stand for the consulship—which was contrary to Sulla's

regulations for the order and rate of promotion. The Senate was forced to give way, thereby breaking the laws which secured its own position. Pompeius and Crassus became consuls for 70, and at once carried a series of laws by which Sulla's arrangements were reversed. The Senate could no longer rely on statute to maintain its control: it must either govern tolerably, or give way to other authorities.

Pompeius in 67 was elected High Admiral of the Mediterranean; in two months, by dint of organisation, he had cleared the seas of pirates. Next year, he was elected Commander-in-Chief of the East with absolute powers over all the provincial governors, to finish the Pontic war and make a settlement. He held this position for about five years, during which he finally crushed Mithridates, reduced the King of Armenia to a subject-ally of Rome, conquered and annexed Syria and Judaea, and rearranged the political map of Asia Minor, annexing provinces, giving and taking away kingdoms, charters, and treaties of alliance; and finally, extended the Roman "sphere of influence" to the Euphrates, where Rome came in contact with the new great-power of Parthia, whose king was paramount from Mesopotamia eastwards to the Hindu Kush. It was a brilliant record of conquest and empire-building, and during these years Pompeius was felt to be the potential master of the Roman state. The question was, how would he use his power when he came back to Rome?

Meanwhile the politicians were busy. The attack on the weakened Senate went on, engineered by the subtle intrigues of Crassus, with whom Caesar was now closely associated. Legislation further curtailing the Senate's powers, prosecution of leading senators on political charges, wholesale bribery to secure the return of "popular" candidates to office, were the normal methods. But both sides were inspired by a dread of what might happen when Pompeius should return: the master of the army, it was felt, could do what he would, and the politicians played desperately for powers which might enable them to stand against him. Further, from all the various masses of discontent—the bankrupt young profligates in "society"; the idle old plunderers from Sulla's army, who

had left their farms ; the children of those whose estates Sulla had confiscated ; the evicted country-folk of the south—there began to arise wild talk, of repudiation of debts, confiscation of property, abolition of law and order, and a general scramble for plunder. Against such schemes the richer classes began to draw together for common defence. Senators and Knights found themselves in an unwonted alliance, and for their leader they chose Cicero. He had made himself a great reputation at the bar and in politics as an opponent of the Sullan system : but he was no violent revolutionary, and believed in the Republic and the rule of the upper classes. In 63, when an outbreak of violence was expected, he was elected consul—by dint of bribery—and throughout the year he laboured gallantly to keep the party of law and order together. A dangerous conspiracy, headed by Catiline, one of the most violent of the ruined spendthrifts, was detected and put down with great skill and firmness by Cicero. The conspirators were arrested and summarily executed ; the safety of Rome, and of the propertied class, was secured. But Pompeius, still busy in the east, was still master of the situation.

In 62 he returned to Italy, and to the immense surprise and relief of all parties, disbanded his army at once. He had no wish to imitate Sulla : let the Senate acknowledge and reward his services in the regular way—and, in particular, help him to provide pensions, in the form of lands, for his soldiers. But the Senate delayed to fulfil his reasonable desires : his land-bill was talked out, the ratification of his vast scheme of settlement in the east was put off. Pompeius, disgusted at such treatment, turned to find help in Caesar. Caesar brought him and Crassus into an understanding : each was to give his influence to get Caesar elected consul, and as consul Caesar would bring in laws to serve their interests. This compact is the famous “First Triumvirate” ; it marks the end of free republican government at Rome. Such was the combined power of the Three that no other force in the state could resist their wishes : Pompeius had his unsurpassed military reputation, and the devotion of his old soldiers, who could again be called to arms at a sign from him ; Crassus had his wealth, his influence with the Knights,

his hold over men of all ranks and parties who were in his debt; Caesar had the support of the Assemblies, and, above all, he had genius. He became consul in 59, and at once went to work: a land-purchase bill, to provide small-holdings, partly for the eastern veterans, partly for the city poor; a bill to reduce the price of a tax-contract out of which the Knights had failed to make the expected profit; a bill to ratify the Eastern Settlement, were all duly introduced, opposed by the Senate, and passed in its despite. Caesar's colleague in the consulship attempted to veto their passage, but was simply ignored. The Three had power, and having it, cared nothing for constitutional forms. Finally, as a reward for his services, Caesar had himself appointed pro-consul of Cisalpine Gaul—which Sulla had erected into a regular province—and of Transalpine Gaul—*i.e.* the new province in the Rhone valley—for five years from 58. From this time onward, Caesar, and not Pompeius, was master of the situation. Politicians in Rome might intrigue, Pompeius himself might attempt to recover control of an army: but Caesar had climbed to the command of the Army of Gaul: with the Army of Gaul he made himself king of the Roman world.

The course of political strife at Rome during these years, therefore, need not much concern us, except in so far as it had reference to Caesar. Pompeius and Crassus, who were left to direct affairs in the city in the interest of the Three, could not work in harmony, and their chief political manager, a rascally young noble named Clodius, carried the organisation of bribery and the engineering of riots to such scandalous extremes that there was a revulsion of feeling against them. Pompeius, too, finding that Caesar's growing reputation was overshadowing his own, was uneasy and inclined to go over to the other side. He was a sincere enough republican at heart, and only the Senate's contemptuous treatment of him had forced him to join hands with Caesar. The latter now seemed to be aiming at a thorough revolution, and Pompeius was with difficulty prevented from deserting him altogether. In 56, Caesar effected a compromise, by which he was to have his own command prolonged for a second five years, while Pompeius and Crassus

were again to become consuls in 55, and in the next year receive important provinces—Pompeius the two Spains, Crassus Syria and the command of the eastern frontier, where a war with Parthia was threatened. Crassus took up his command in due course, attempted an invasion of the Parthian sphere, and lost his army and his life in Mesopotamia in 53. Pompeius remained in Italy, administering his provinces by deputy—an unconstitutional proceeding—and becoming more and more estranged from Caesar.

Caesar meanwhile was in the full tide of his wars in Gaul. In the Cisalpine province he had the finest recruiting-ground in Italy, a prosperous land where the "popular" leaders had always been in great favour since the days of Marius. In the Transalpine, he had an incomparable opportunity to exercise his army and win great renown. First, in 58, he had to repel two invasions which were threatening the new Roman province—one from Switzerland, one from across the Rhine. These campaigns led him farther north and west into the valleys of the Seine and Loire, and the Belgian country. Turning a war of defence into one of conquest, he proceeded to reduce the whole of Gaul. His campaigns, apart from their immediate effect on the Roman Revolution, are a turning-point of European history. Hitherto, the Roman power had been centred around the Mediterranean: Caesar advanced it into lands which look to the Atlantic and the north. From the shores of Gaul he descried Britain, the western outpost of Europe, and led thither his two reconnaissances to teach the islanders that they must not support their kin in Gaul against the Roman power. On the eastern side, again, he fixed the limit of Roman enterprise at the Rhine, and stopped the flowing tide of German immigration.

In these campaigns of conquest, and in the even harder task of suppressing the great rebellions which followed in 53 and 52—the latter of which came very near to ending in a Roman disaster in the great struggle round the fortress of Alesia—he made his army. His men were exercised under one of the most versatile and daring generals in history; trained in novel tactics, long forced marches—for instance, Caesar's dash across the Cevennes in deep snow in the winter of 52—elaborate

entrenchments, both for attack and for defence ; above all, united in absolute loyalty to himself, a loyalty so strong that for more than a century the army would own no commander who did not bear his name. There are bloody and merciless passages in the story. Caesar did not spare a treacherous enemy, and in savage warfare savage methods were perhaps inevitable. But he was by nature clement, no killer for killing's sake, and always he was more than a mere soldier, a statesman with an eye for larger issues, a keen observer of the men and the land, and the chronicler, in language of flawless simplicity, of all he saw and did.

It may well be that these years in Gaul were a time of enlightenment for him. He was at a distance from the intrigues and petty interests of Roman politics—though all the time he kept in close touch with them through his agents and correspondents, and used freely the great hoards of Gaulish gold which fell into his hands, to provide his agents with arguments. He lived in a larger and freer air, and was able to take in the wider meanings of the whole revolution-problem, its imperial as well as its Italian and domestic aspect. At any rate, he felt in himself the power and the will to attempt a thorough reconstruction of the state: and his rivals and opponents at Rome grew more and more apprehensive.

At last, in 52, the disorder and corruption in the city became so bad that public opinion called for Pompeius as dictator: he refused the title, but allowed the Senate to nominate him consul without a colleague—a gross breach of constitutional propriety, perpetrated by the constitutional party—and with these powers he succeeded in partially restoring order, and then passed a number of laws which gravely threatened Caesar's position. In brief, Caesar desired to become consul for a second time immediately on resigning his proconsulship in Gaul, and it had been arranged that the appointment of his successor should not be discussed before March in 50. Under the existing system, this implied that no successor could take over the province from him before January in 48, by which time he expected to be elected consul: he would pass from the one office to the other

without any interval during which he could be called to account on any of the charges of irregularity to which his actions in 59 had laid him open. But Pompeius' new law—a rearrangement of the method of appointing provincial governors—made it possible for Caesar's successor to take over the province early in 49, and this laid Caesar open to attack. It was a direct breach of the undertaking given by Pompeius in 56.

Caesar's agents in Rome were instructed to gain time, and if possible effect a compromise. Pompeius' own position—he was still absentee governor of Spain—was irregular: he controlled the Spanish army, while Caesar would be left without any command. But Pompeius, who was now openly on the side of the Senate, refused all such offers: and at last, on the 10th of January 49, Caesar with one of his legions crossed the Rubicon, the frontier between the Cisalpine province and Italy proper, and began the Civil War. He had a sufficient pretext in Pompeius' breach of faith, but in any case matters had gone too far for peace, and we need not stay to discuss who was technically in the right. The issue lay between Caesar, who had a remedy for the evils of the time, and the Senate, whose position rendered all remedies impossible.

Pompeius and the senators, terrified at this sudden and swift advance, and feeling that their raw Italian levies could not face the veterans from Gaul, evacuated Rome—a step never before taken, even in the worst straits of Hannibal's invasion—and then crossed from Brundisium to the coast of Epirus (near Durazzo), there to drill their troops and call up supports from the eastern provinces. Caesar occupied Rome, and announced that he would act in the name of the state, thereby treating the Pompeians as an insurrectionary faction: and then went on to deal with the army of Spain, which he forced to surrender after a brilliant campaign of six weeks near the Ebro. Marseilles, which had declared for the Senate, was taken shortly after. Caesar came back to Rome in December, had himself duly elected consul, and went on to attack the Pompeians about Durazzo. Though the Adriatic was patrolled by the Pompeian fleet, he managed to slip across with his army in two divisions, and attempted to blockade Pompeius'

much larger force by a line of entrenchments. The attempt failed, and Caesar was badly defeated, but succeeded in retreating in good order across country into Thessaly. Pompeius followed, was drawn into battle near Pharsalus, and his army was shattered on August 9, 48. He fled to Egypt, where he was murdered on landing by a Roman officer.

Caesar, following him to Alexandria, and remaining to settle a dispute about the succession to the throne of Egypt—now a Roman protectorate—was besieged in the palace, and shut up there till January 47, when he was relieved by a force from Pergamum. In August he went to Asia Minor, crushed a rebellion in Pontus, and resettled the eastern provinces. Meantime, the Pompeians had rallied after their defeat, and had occupied Africa. He broke them a second time at Thapsus near Carthage in April 46, and again at Munda, in southern Spain, in March 45. These victories made him absolute master of the Roman world: the senatorial party was shattered, its members slain or forced to submit to Caesar. Like Sulla, he took the title of Dictator, which was finally granted him *for life* in 45: dictatorial power without a time-limit meant absolute monarchy.

In this position, he began the reconstruction of the state. His work was done in the intervals of a desperate war, and in the year of peace left him after Munda. It is therefore incomplete, but it suggests the imperial scheme which he had in mind. The foundation of his power was the army, and though he disbanded many of his legions, and made no standing establishment of guards, his was essentially a military monarchy. And this principle was applied to civil administration as well—Caesar the true source and the sole dispenser of authority. The People, hitherto the fountain of authority, was to be greatly enlarged by new methods of enfranchisement. The franchise was no longer to be confined to Italians, but gradually extended to embrace all provincials, so that it should no longer mean sovereignty, but rather a common allegiance to Caesar and a common membership in the Roman civilisation. The Assembly was simply to register the decrees of Caesar. He proposed, and in part applied, a great

scheme of colonisation, the plantation of communities of Romans throughout the provinces—an extension of the policy of Gaius Gracchus, whereby Roman ideas and manners of public life would be propagated throughout the empire.

The magistracy was placed under his control, for he assumed the power of nominating a majority of candidates for each group of offices. He made appointments to most of the provincial governorships. From time to time he even superseded the magistrates at Rome by *prefects* appointed by and responsible to himself. The Senate thus lost its controlling powers, which passed into his hands. Caesar evidently intended to give it a new character, no longer a council of Roman nobles, drawn all from one race and class, but a representative council of the Empire, including men nominated by himself from the provinces. Throughout, all provincial administrators were to be responsible to him. The tithe-system was abolished, all direct taxes were to be collected directly by his agents. He standardised Italian local-government in a law defining the powers and qualifications of municipal authorities. He also introduced many reforms in detail—restriction of slave-labour, of corn-doles, reforms of coinage and the calendar, and so forth. No detail escaped his powerful intelligence.

But his work was stopped ere it was well begun. On the 15th of March 44 he was murdered at a meeting of Senate by a band of nobles, to many of whom he had given great favour. His death was the result of the hatred inspired in the old senatorial class by the sight of one man gathering into his own hands the powers which they had so misused. And so the state was again plunged into civil war. The murder could not restore the Republic: it only propounded the question, who was to succeed Caesar?

VIII

AUGUSTUS AND THE AUGUSTAN PRINCIPATE

It was taken for granted that the death of the tyrant meant the end of the tyranny, and that the Senate was *ipso facto* restored. But the final decision lay with the armies of the western provinces, and they were fully converted to Caesarism, and debated only *to whom* to transfer their allegiance.

Caesar had left his vast fortune, which included much that was really public money administered by him, to his grand-nephew Octavian, who in terms of the will became his adopted son, and whom Caesar had doubtless intended to be his successor in supreme power. He was in his nineteenth year, a delicate and untried lad, and at the time of the murder was at the headquarters of the army of Macedonia. He came to Rome, to find that Antony, one of Caesar's old lieutenants, who was consul at the time, had seized the Dictator's funds and papers, and was busily intriguing to succeed to his power. Thus impeded from his inheritance, Octavian for the time being took sides with the Senate, whose leader Cicero thought his name and influence would be useful instruments against Antony. Civil war broke out in November, after half a year of uncertainty and confusion, and passed through the following stages :

(i) Antony had got himself appointed to command the Macedonian army, which he transported to Italy, and with which he proceeded to attack Decimus Brutus, one of the murderers, who was governor of Cisalpine Gaul. Meantime Lepidus, Plancus, and Pollio, governors of the provinces of Transalpine Gaul and north Spain, awaited the turn of events in Italy. Octavian raised a force of Caesar's discharged veterans, got two of the Macedonian legions to desert to him, and marched with the Senates' generals to support Brutus against Antony. Antony was defeated before Mutina, but Octavian was left in sole command by the death of his colleagues, and refrained from following up the victory: Antony made good his retreat, and joined forces with Lepidus,

while Octavian came to Rome to demand the consulship. The Senate, thinking that Antony was crushed, refused: Octavian had himself elected by force, and then opened negotiations with Antony and Lepidus. In October 43 the three of them met at Bononia, with the support of Plancus and Pollio, and made a compact to avenge the death of Caesar—the “Second Triumvirate.” They were forcibly elected “Commissioners to settle the Republic” with full powers. Octavian had gained his end by weakening both sides, and forcing his rivals to recognise him. The Three thus controlled all the armies in the west. Decimus Brutus was deserted by his troops, and murdered.

(ii) Meantime the chief leaders of the anti-Caesian party, Marcus Brutus and Gaius Cassius, had left Rome to raise the eastern provinces. They had collected a large army and supplies in Asia, and now crossed into Thrace. The Three, having put their chief opponents in Italy, including Cicero, out of the way by massacre, marched across Macedonia and joined battle at Philippi, where in two engagements Cassius and Brutus were defeated and slain. With them, all hope of a senatorial restoration died. The only force left to resist the Three was that of Sextus Pompeius, son of the great general, who had become master of a great privateering fleet and was in possession of Sicily. Octavian and Antony—Lepidus being now thrust aside—divided the management of the Empire between them: Antony to recover the eastern provinces, and beat back a threatened invasion by the Parthians, who were taking advantage of the Roman civil war; Octavian to provide lands for the legionaries in Italy—since many must be discharged—to deal with Pompeius, and to restore order in the western provinces.

(iii) Antony, an able general, but a man of uncontrolled passions, speedily fell under the influence of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt—who had been Cæsar’s mistress—and assumed the rôle of an eastern despot. His schemes of eastern conquest ended in a disastrous expedition against the Parthians in 36, while his behaviour at the court of Alexandria alienated Roman sympathies. Meantime Octavian, in spite of much discontent and disorder in Italy caused by his seizure of lands for the

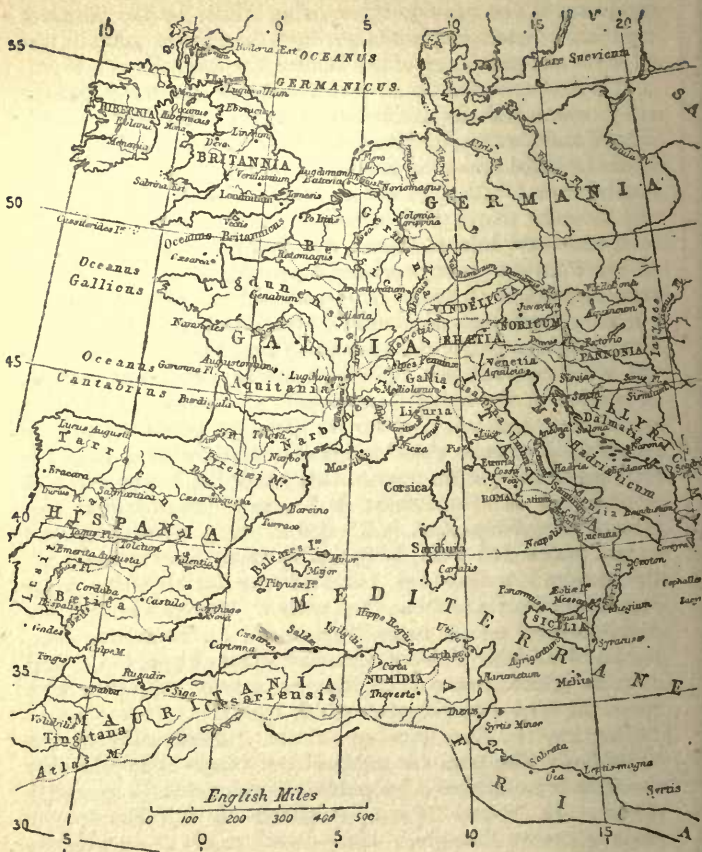
troops, succeeded by tact and resource in gaining confidence and restoring order. After an abortive attempt to come to terms with Pompeius, he and his friend Agrippa created a new fleet, by which Pompeius' piratical squadrons were shattered in Sicilian waters in 36, and safety was secured for the corn-fleets. Octavian more and more sought to bring back normal conditions in the west. He was elected consul in 33, and used this office, a regular and constitutional one, rather than his irregular powers as triumvir. Roman and western opinion grew steadily in his favour, and at last, in 32, when Antony and Cleopatra declared war on him, he was able to stand forth as the champion of Roman principles against Orientalism. He defeated their great fleet in 31 at the battle of Actium (Gulf of Volo), and thus saved the Roman dominion from being rent in two. Unity and peace were restored: it remained to restore constitutional government, and the determination of its form was in his hands.

Two principles had emerged which had to be observed in the settlement. First, all military authority must be concentrated in the hands of one man: the existence of several armies, each the servant of its general, had led to disaster. Secondly, he must obtain the co-operation of the old governing class in administering the Empire: Caesar had met his death because he had offended this class, which would tolerate no absolute master. Despotism, to be possible, must at least be decently veiled. These two principles, Caesarism and Republicanism, were in reality incompatible. The concentration of military power was in effect a negation of the republican notion of equality among members of the ruling class, and in direct contradiction to the traditions of the Republic. But owing to the tact and skill of the first Emperor, the contradiction did not prominently appear in his time, and thus the new system of administration had a period of peace in which to begin its development. Under his successors, from Tiberius to Nero, there was increasing friction, a growing sense of strain as between the Emperor and the Roman nobility, which resulted finally in the almost complete extinction of the latter. But, meanwhile, the governmental system of the Empire had grown up, and with it a new method and tradition of administration

and a new governing class. The full organisation of these was completed in the second century after Christ by the Emperor Hadrian, whose reign marks perhaps the highest point in the strength and prosperity of the Roman Empire.

The first question, as to who should be the master of the army, was manifestly decided already: Octavian had no rival. Brutus and Cassius, Lepidus, Sextus Pompeius, Antony, had all tried and failed against him, and at the age of thirty-two he was lord of some fifty legions and an indefinite number of auxiliary and irregular troops of all arms and races. He bore the name of the soldiers' beloved Caesar, and now added to it, as a title which in his case became almost a personal name, the designation *Imperator*—"holder of *imperium*," standing in that relation to the individual Roman soldier which was the supreme form of Roman public authority (see Chap. I). There remained the question, what was to become of the Senate and People, in relation to the military monarch? Caesar had propounded one answer, and had died for it: Octavian proceeded to give another. It may be stated in his own words, written four-and-forty years later, in the record of his public life, a copy of which is preserved on a monument at Angora: "In my sixth and seventh consulships (*i.e.* in 28 and 27 B.C.), when I had put an end to the civil wars, being by universal consent master of the state and its resources, I handed over the Republic to the Senate and People to do as they wished. For this service, the Senate decreed me the name *Augustus*. . . . From that time, I enjoyed a higher *dignity* than any other citizen, but I had no more *official power* than those who were colleagues with me in the several magistracies which I held."

The key to this passage is the "Restoration of the Republic." The term *res publica* (see Chap. I) implies that the state is administered by publicly appointed and responsible officers. In 28 and 27 B.C., Augustus—to call him by the name of honour then given him—ceased to act as an absolute and irresponsible ruler, and gave up all the powers he held to the Senate and People. Peace was restored, and the state might now return to a normal government; but the army must have one commander. A compromise was therefore effected. Augustus received back certain powers: the



THE ROMAN EMPIRE



UNDER AUGUSTUS

Bartholomew, Edin

ordinary magistrates resumed their functions, the People its right of conferring authority and legislating, and the Senate its direction of administration—in theory. In practice, the powers of Augustus were so wide as to alter the whole poise of the constitution.

To begin with, he was appointed governor for ten years of all those provinces which required military garrisons, with the sole command of the armies there stationed. This appointment was renewed every ten years: but his successors received it for life. The other provinces were to be administered as before by proconsuls, under the Senate's direction. The Emperor's own provinces were in charge of legates appointed by and representing himself. The legates were chosen from men of the senatorial nobility who had served in the regular magistracies, and they ranked as *propraetors*. The Emperor's were the frontier-provinces and those which were not yet sufficiently settled to dispense with a garrison.

Then, as to the Emperor's position in Rome and Italy: Augustus had himself elected consul in each year till 23, so that as one of the two chief magistrates he was entitled to convene the Senate and the Assembly and conduct administrative business. But for various reasons this was inconvenient, and in 23 he resigned his consulship and instead received (a) a new kind of *imperium*, held not for the term of a definite magistracy but for life, which he could exercise *anywhere*, either in his own provinces, or in those of the proconsuls, or in Rome and Italy, and which was superior to that of any other magistrate or promagistrate. At the same time, he retained his governorship of his own provinces. Again, in the same year, he received (b) the *tribunician power* for life—i.e. the rights and privileges of a tribune of the Commons. Being a patrician, he could not be *tribune*, but he now could act *like* a tribune, with powers of veto upon all magistrates, of convening the Senate and the Commons' meeting, and having his person sacred from all violence or interference. By the combination of these two powers, the unlimited *imperium* and the tribunician authority, he was, in effect, absolute master of the state. Gaius

Gracchus, by his notion of annual re-election to the tribunate, had foreshadowed the latter; Sulla and Pompeius and Caesar had suggested the former; Augustus had both, and he had them *by consent of all parties*. In the sense that he was freely appointed to them, his powers were republican: in the sense that they made him absolute, they were imperial. The crux was the undivided military authority: whoso controlled the army in the last resort controlled the state.

Thus Augustus made a new constitution under show of restoring the old. He called himself *princeps*—"chief of state," or "first citizen"—and the constitution is known as the Principate.

The addition of the *princeps* to the older institutions—Assemblies, Magistracy, Senate—altered the working of each of them. (i) Augustus was the political heir of Caesar, who, in turn, was the last of the "popular" leaders, whose claim was that the Assemblies should be free to exercise their will. But Augustus by his tribunician power had full control of the initiative in legislation, so that the Commons simply registered his will. Further, he assumed the right to issue ordinances having the force of law, and this was gradually developed into the theory that the Emperor's will, thus directly expressed, was actually the source of law. In elections, again, he received the power to "commend" a proportion of candidates for each magistracy, who were returned without a poll: and thus the people's choice was restricted.

(ii) The *princeps* as such was not strictly a magistrate—though he might from time to time take office as one of the consuls in any year—but as holder of tribunician power and unlimited *imperium*, he could control all the magistrates. A certain number of them always were his nominees, and none could well be elected without his approval. And even so, there was a tendency to transfer to him the work of various administrative departments, even in Rome and Italy—*e.g.* police, fire-brigade, charge of corn-supply, upkeep of roads—which had belonged to the magistrates. These were placed in charge, not of magistrates, but of *prefects* responsible only to the *princeps*, and so the magistracies became purely honorary

positions. The chief reason for this was that the republican magistracies, held for short periods, could not ensure continuity and efficiency. The problems of administration had become too complex for these noble amateurs, and must be attacked by centralised and expert methods. To begin with, Augustus and his successor Tiberius sought to fill some of these new departments with men of the old governing class: but that class was degenerate, and its place was gradually filled with men of a new order, chosen for merit and efficiency. This body was called by the old name of the "Equestrian Order" or the "Knights," but it had little in common with the publicans and contractors of the Republic: in many cases it was drawn from the non-commissioned ranks in the army—*i.e.* composed of ex-centurions, men of the middle-class, trained in military discipline, and depending entirely on the Emperor for promotion. In particular, the Imperial Guard, 9000 picked troops forming the garrison of Rome, were commanded by an Equestrian prefect, who became the most powerful official in Italy next to the Emperor.

(iii) The Senate, the central organ of the old constitution, was intended to be a sort of partner with the *princeps* in controlling the administration. Augustus restored to it its former exclusive character as a body of nobles and ex-magistrates, and, in appearance at least, even increased its powers. Its resolutions received the force of laws, and were used for legislation more frequently than the form of passing bills in the Assemblies: it acquired the functions of a High Court of Justice under presidency of the consuls, and not even the Emperor could recall a sentence once passed by it: and it was regularly consulted, at any rate by Augustus and Tiberius, on all important matters, so that it might continue to mould the policy of the state. But the Senate, in spite of these offers of co-operation, steadily refused to assist the Emperors; partly because the nobles were jealous that the Emperor should exercise powers so vastly superior to those of any other of the senators, partly because those powers made any real equality between the two partners impossible. Instead of seriously debating the questions submitted, the senators would vote steadily for what they believed the

Emperor to desire, refused to accept responsibility, and threw the whole burden back upon his shoulders. Thus the Emperors were compelled to seek advice and assistance elsewhere, and in course of time the Senate was ousted by a new body, the Privy Council, composed of men chosen by the Emperor to consider imperial questions, while the Senate became little more than the town-council of Rome.

Such was the Imperial Constitution, a compromise between irreconcilable opposites. In practice, the powers of the Emperor tended to absorb all others, and to be, in turn, developed into a bureaucracy of officials directly appointed by and responsible solely to him. This was especially the case in regard to the military services, since he was their supreme head from the first, and in regard to finance. The greater part of the imperial revenues was collected by his agents and managed by his clerks. Indeed, it was managed like a private estate, with its offices in the palace, and the clerical staff were his private servants rather than government officials. Thus there was a danger, which became serious under the fourth Emperor, Claudius, that the Empire would be administered by slaves and freedmen, who were notoriously corrupt, though often men of great ability. In the reign of Hadrian, however, the employment of such men for high posts in the clerical staff was abolished, and the places were given to citizens of Equestrian rank, with a fixed standard of promotion and salaries.

But in one matter the Senate and People still retained supreme importance. The powers of the *princeps* were granted to him severally for life: but at his death they ceased to exist, and must be re-created and re-enacted for his successor. The reigning Emperor might suggest his successor, by prominently associating a relative or a friend with himself in the work of government, but he could not nominate. That was the function of the Senate, with the approval of the People, and the Senate retained the right of making an Emperor to the close of the third century after Christ.

Yet even this power was apparent, not real. No Emperor could really accede without the consent of the army on which, in the last resort, his power was based: and thus when there

was any dispute about the succession, it could only be solved by force of arms. So long as the house of the Caesars remained, the army would have none but a Caesar for its head : but when Nero, last of the house, was dead, the question was open, and the several great forces of the Empire—the Guards in Italy, the legionary garrisons of the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates frontiers—fought for the privilege of nominating the Emperor. The candidate who was successful in destroying his rivals could force the unarmed Senate and People formally to confer on him those powers which his troops had won for him. And it is the most striking testimony to the strength of the governmental machine which Augustus and his successors constructed, that it was able to survive the shocks of those terrible wars of succession which broke out, first in A.D. 68, a second time in 192, and which became the rule during the tempestuous third century. Emperors might rise and fall, but the Empire stood.

IX

THE WORK OF THE EMPIRE IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES A.D.

THE great work of the Roman Empire was in its provincial administrative system and in its defensive policy, and the development of these went on, for the most part, out of sight of Rome. Contemporary historians are absorbed in the affairs of the city, its scandals and intrigues, the incessant feud between the Emperors and the old nobility, with all its horrors of conspiracy and reprisal, and in particular the working of the terrible Law of Treason by which the Emperors defended themselves. These writers, especially Tacitus, paint a series of lurid portraits of the early Emperors : the subtle, gracious, and cold-blooded Augustus ; Tiberius, who, though presented as a monster of duplicity, cruelty, and sensuality, was probably a man of splendid qualities, a great general, a careful yet generous steward of the revenue, of unsparing industry, but reserved, tactless, and suspicious in his dealings with the

servile yet jealous senators ; the boy Caligula, driven mad by the intoxication of absolute power ; Claudius, busy and pettifogging, a strange combination of good sense and futility, dexterously managed by his unscrupulous freedmen-secretaries and his Empresses ; Nero, half artist, half brute, stained with fratricide and matricide, dissipating the state's resources in an orgy of spending, till his neglected armies revolted in disgust. After these, and after the Civil Wars of 68-70, come men of another type, Vespasian and his sons, and then the series of the greatest Emperors, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius ; sprung from the Italian middle-class or from the provinces, free from the wilder vices of the old nobility, and independent of its traditions. In their time, it becomes apparent that Rome and the native Romans are no longer supreme in an empire of subjects. The level of political privilege throughout the Empire becomes more uniform : Roman roads and Roman law run more and more widely through its length and breadth. And continually the system of administration is being developed, and it is upon this development, rather than the story of the Emperors' persons and lives, that we must turn our attention in this chapter.

The Republic, from the Punic Wars onwards, had been a conquering state : the Empire, from the death of Augustus, ceased almost entirely to extend the Roman dominion further, and turned to the task in which the Republic had signally failed, of giving the subject territories an efficient administration. Again, the Roman dominion was co-extensive with European civilisation : beyond it were barbarism and Orientalism. The Empire was therefore called upon to construct a coherent system of frontier-defence. It was, indeed, the pressure of these two necessities, of administration and defence, which had produced the Empire. The needs of the northern frontier, threatened by the Teutonic and Cimbric hordes at the end of the second century B.C., had called into being the professional army of Marius. In the east, the struggle with Mithridates raised up Sulla. Each of these in turn became master of the state. Further, the administrative incompetence of the Senate gave political power to the First Triumvirate, and finally Caesar, having carried forward the work of Marius

in Gaul and on the Rhine, used the army to set up a centralised monarchy. This monarchy was modified in form by Augustus, but it remained in fact: and it successfully performed its appointed work.

Thus, though the Roman Empire has often been represented as a mere despotism, in which liberty and creative progress of all kinds were suppressed, it may far more justly be regarded as the greatest political agent in civilisation which the world has ever seen. True, it came into being in a world which was old, weary, disillusioned, exhausted by the Civil Wars. It was not rich in ideals, and its spiritual life ran low: but it did an immense practical service in giving peace and a great measure of material prosperity to its dominions, and in that peace were developed the two forces which link the ancient to the modern world, the Roman Law and the Christian Church.

The former of these was, of course, the product of the Empire itself, built up by the combined operation of two factors, the legal practices of the Romans themselves, and the unifying and generalising principles of Greek philosophical thought. Christianity, on the other hand, though it came into being within the Roman dominion, was at first regarded rather as a hostile force. The various polytheistic religions of the ancient world, including that of the Romans, were naturally tolerant: the polytheist is ready to believe in other gods besides his own. But the Imperial Government, while it permitted all worships that were not subversive of public order and morals, expected all its subjects to pay religious honours to itself, in the form of sacrifice to the dead Emperors, and to the guardian-spirit of the reigning Emperor. This worship the Christians refused, as dishonouring the One God, and they were therefore suspected of disloyalty. In the third century, again, the attempt was made to unite the whole Empire in the worship of the Sun, as the symbol of imperial unity. The pagan gods were coming to be regarded as so many expressions or effluences of the Sun-god, and their worship was tolerated. But again the Christians refused, and again they were persecuted. In the end, however, their numbers and influence increased so greatly that the state was

fain to make terms with them, and even to take them into alliance. And thus, under Constantine and his successors, Christianity became the imperial religion, and the notion was created that the Church and the Empire were the spiritual and the civil form of the Kingdom of God upon earth—a notion which continued to act powerfully upon European history to the end of the Middle Ages.

Turning, then, to a brief survey of the imperial system in its two main branches of administration and defence, let us note some of its important characteristics and stages.

(i) The Empire witnessed a rapidly accelerated process of enfranchisement throughout the provinces. Augustus and Tiberius, indeed (28 B.C. to A.D. 37), sought to maintain the paramountcy of the Roman and Italian race throughout the Empire: they were sparing in their grants of the Roman citizenship to provincial communities and individuals. It is true that the citizenship, now that the Assemblies at Rome were no longer sovereign bodies, ceased to carry with it any real political power: but it implied membership of the dominant race, access to the Roman law, and many valuable privileges, such as immunity from direct taxation except the legacy-duty and from all save imperial customs-charges. From the time of Claudius, however (A.D. 41-54), it began to be more widely conferred, the intermediate status of the "Latin right" being used as a stepping-stone to the full Roman franchise. Communities which showed themselves ready to accept Roman manners were thus admitted to full privilege, particularly in the western provinces, where the Spaniards, Gauls, and Africans, and in a lesser degree the Illyrian peoples of the Danube-country, were readily assimilated to the Italian civilisation. In the eastern provinces, on the other hand, most of the peoples were already imbued with the older civilisation and manners of Hellenism, and this part of the Empire remained Greek, on the whole, in life and language, while the west was Latinised.

The chief method of direct Romanisation was the granting of the status of *colony* or of *municipality* to a provincial community: in some cases a body of discharged Roman soldiers was planted in the community as a nucleus, and the rest of the inhabi-

tants were gradually raised to equality with them ; in others, the colonial or municipal charter would be given without such plantation. The charter implied that the community became a town of the Italian type, with municipal institutions of magistrates, town-council, and common assembly of freeholders. As such institutions were propagated, the Empire tended more and more to become a federation of free towns, locally self-governing, whose inhabitants used the Roman law and—in the west at any rate—the Roman language, dress, and methods of building. Naturally, this assimilation was most completely accomplished in the Mediterranean countries, for Roman customs were native to the climate of these : in the lands beyond the Alps, which look to the Atlantic and the northern seas, Roman customs were less firmly rooted and more artificial.

The process of enfranchisement reached its completion in 212, when the Emperor Caracalla conferred Roman citizenship upon all freeborn inhabitants of the Empire. Henceforward there was no difference of privilege between Italians and those of other races : all were now graded, not according to nationality, but according to status, free or unfree. Free-men were equal before the law, and equally subject to the Emperor : and taxation, which was now becoming heavier, pressed upon all alike.

In regard to the central or imperial (as distinct from local) government, the secrets of the Empire were system and responsibility. Taxation was based upon a comprehensive survey of production, and was subject to periodic readjustment accordingly. "Protective" taxation there was none, all being levied solely for purposes of revenue. Peculation was rendered more and more difficult ; extortion was severely punished ; the old system of tax-farming by syndicates of private speculators was reduced, and finally disappeared, as the government created a civil service for the collection of revenue. In the administration of justice, the Emperor's vast powers of intervention were used to create a system of Courts of Appeal, in which judges delegated by him heard cases from all parts of the Empire : thus the provincial governors were no longer absolute in their provinces, even among non-enfranchised peoples. (A familiar example is the appeal made by S. Paul

from the tribunal of Festus governor of Judaea to that of Nero himself.) Communications were improved by the extension of the great roads throughout the Empire, by the cutting of canals, and the construction of harbour-works. A great system of posts carried the Emperor's despatches to all parts, keeping the outlying provinces in constant touch with the centre. Piracy disappeared, and commerce by sea was regular and safe.

Much land, both in Italy and in the provinces, came in course of time to be imperial property, especially during the long feud between the Emperors and the old nobility, when many great estates were forfeit for their owners' treason. These lands were managed by the Emperors' agents, and leased to free tenants who had security of tenure and fixed rent. Latterly, however, the tenants became bound to the soil, paying a stated ratio of produce—in effect, imperial serfs. Mineral-workings of all sorts were also imperial property.

As the Emperors gradually took over the entire charge of government, the liberties of the local communities began to decrease. Municipal life was apt to become listless and corrupt, and the central government was obliged to interfere more and more directly in local affairs. Imperial commissioners were sent to regulate municipal finance, and the people became accustomed to have the whole work of government done for them from above. This was true of Italy as well as the provinces, as the superior status of the Italians was gradually levelled down.

The general tendency of provincial government was to transfer all the provinces to the Emperor's own department. All new annexations after 27 B.C., when the division of provinces between Augustus and the Senate was made, were under the Emperor from the first, and by the close of the third century the promagisterial governors had practically disappeared, and all governors were imperial legates, prefects, or procurators—*i.e.* all appointed by and responsible to the Emperor—and all provincial revenues were handled by his servants, the old senatorial treasury having become merely the municipal chest of Rome. The annexations referred to were

mostly former protectorates which were now directly administered instead of being ruled by allied native princes: for example, Egypt became a province in 30 B.C., and being the chief source of corn-supply for Italy, was kept under very strict imperial control, no senatorial officer being admitted to it: Galatia, Cappadocia, Mauretania, Thrace, Lycia, and other regions were similarly annexed during the first century A.D. In other cases, the additions to the Roman territory were connected with frontier-development, and fall to be considered in the next section.

(ii) The Roman dominion, as has been stated, was essentially Mediterranean in character. It was centred in the lands which look towards the great inland sea, and whose northern edges are bounded by the long series of mountains, Pyrenees, Maritime Alps, Pennine, Raetic, and Dinaric Alps, Balkans, reaching along the tableland of Asia Minor to the Caucasus. Eastwards the Syrian and Arabian deserts, southwards the Nile cataracts, the Libyan desert, and the Atlas mountains complete the boundary. But even in republican times the Romans had passed beyond these limits: in western Spain they looked to the Atlantic, and Caesar's campaigns in Gaul had turned their eyes to the north. Behind the mountain-barriers, in the regions of the Rhine, the Elbe, and the Danube, lay the great plains of middle Europe, a reservoir of restless barbarians—Germans, Goths, Sarmatians, Dacians, Bastarnians. On the east, again, in the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris and on the Iranian plateau beyond, were the oriental peoples—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the rest. How was Rome to adjust her relations to all these alien and hostile masses?

The Empire, of course, pursued different policies in different regions from time to time. But, in general, it refrained from conquest and concentrated upon defence: its advances into new territories were undertaken in search of a suitable frontier at which to stop. Thus Augustus' generals conquered the Alpine regions to secure the plains of north Italy against incursions by the mountain-tribes, and pushed the frontier back to the upper Danube. Then, advancing eastwards from Caesar's limit on the Rhine, they attempted to subdue

Germany as far as the Elbe, and for about twenty years this whole region, from the North Sea to the Erz mountains, was nominally Roman. But in A.D. 9, a Roman general and three legions were trapped and destroyed by a German rising in the forests of Westphalia, and Augustus decided to withdraw back to the Rhine. A permanent occupation of Germany would have required a large increase in the standing army: under the new arrangement, the legions of the Rhine served both as a frontier-garrison and as the army of occupation for Gaul. These legions, eight in number, with their complement of auxiliary troops, were stationed in two districts, with headquarters at Mayence and Wesel; their generals were under strict orders to undertake no wars of conquest eastwards, but to keep the German tribes in awe. In the reigns of Vespasian and his sons (A.D. 70-96), however, a large tract east of the upper Rhine, and in the angle between it and the Danube, was added to Roman territory, and secured, in these and succeeding reigns, by a continuous line of stockade and rampart from the northern slopes of the Taunus along the upper Main, and southwards to join the similarly fortified frontier north of the upper Danube, and touching that river near Ratisbon. This region was imperial estate, cultivated by tithe-paying tenants. It remained Roman territory till the middle of the third century, when the inroads of the Germans forced the frontier back to the Rhine.

Another and more notable advance was the conquest of south Britain. By the reign of Claudius commercial enterprise had so far penetrated into the island that the government decided to secure Roman interests by annexation. From A.D. 43 the Roman arms were carried steadily forward, driving British resistance into the Welsh mountains, and pushing the frontier farther and farther north, in spite of rebellions such as that of Boudicca (Boadicea), queen of the Norfolk district, in 61. Lincoln, Chester, and York became garrison stations, and behind them flourishing Romanised towns sprang up, such as Colchester, St. Albans, and London. In 80 the legate Agricola finally subjugated North Wales, and then advanced through Northumbria into Caledonia, and made a new frontier on the Forth and Clyde. Shortly

afterwards, the Romans withdrew behind the Cheviots, and about 122, Hadrian built a great wall or rampart across the island from the Tyne to the Solway. Again, in 140, the legate of Antoninus recovered south Caledonia, and made a rampart along Agricola's old line and rebuilt his frontier forts. But the restless Picts proved too hard to hold, and about 180 the Romans again withdrew to Hadrian's Wall. South of this, Britain remained a Roman province for three centuries more, till the attacks of the Saxons forced the imperial government to abandon it finally: by that time the heart of the Empire was threatened, and its outlying parts could no longer be held.

North-east from Italy, again, the early Emperors continually advanced their frontier until it lay along the middle and lower Danube. Augustus himself, passing from the Adriatic seaboard behind the Julian and Dinaric Alps, occupied the valleys of the Save and Drave, and his generals crossed the Balkans from Macedonia and conquered Moesia (Servia and Bulgaria). Gradually the garrison-stations were shifted northwards, till by the second century the troops were massed along the Danube itself, from the neighbourhood of Vienna to the Black Sea. East of its mouth, the imperial government established a protectorate over the native kings in the Crimea, and thus gained access to the great cornlands of South Russia. But this progress, though steady and continuous, was not without its checks and disasters. The Danube was not itself a good frontier-line, for it was continually being crossed by migratory and marauding bands from the north, and the peoples to the south were often restless. Between A.D. 6 and 9 the future Emperor Tiberius was engaged in putting down a formidable revolt in the new province of Pannonia: again in 68-70, during the Civil Wars after Nero's death, the Danubian regions were overrun, and had to be practically reconquered by Vespasian: and in the reign of Domitian (81-96), the Romans were threatened by the rise of a strong and warlike kingdom in Dacia, with its centres in the Carpathians and Transylvanian Alps. Domitian's Dacian wars ended in failure and something like disgrace for the Empire—the Dacian king was

able even to exact a subsidy from the imperial government—and Trajan, who became Emperor in 98, decided to redeem Roman credit. In two wars between 101 and 107 he first humbled and then conquered the Dacians, and annexed their country as a province, so that the frontier now made a long *détour* north of the lower Danube along the Carpathians. On the river, also, it was strengthened by a continuous line of forts connected by a stockade.

It was upon the Danube frontier that the attacks of the outer barbarians pressed most heavily. From the time of Marcus Aurelius (161–180) onwards, there was almost continuous warfare in these regions. Thus the armies of the Danube became the most important forces in the Empire, and most of the Emperors of the third century were set up by them, in the repeated wars of succession which fill that period: Septimius Severus (193–211), Decius (249–251), Trebonian (251–253), Valerian (253–260), Claudius II (268–270), Aurelian (270–275), and finally Diocletian (elected in 284) were all their nominees. And it was the needs of the Danube frontier which chiefly determined Diocletian's policy in readjusting the imperial system.

These frontier-wars were ultimately caused by the awakening of northern and middle Europe, and especially of the Goths. Leaving their barren homes on the Baltic shores, the Goths were pressing south, attracted by the wealth and prosperity of the Roman dominions, and thus the whole population of middle Europe was set moving. Against these tides of barbarism the Roman frontiers were set like dykes against an encroaching sea, while behind them the Mediterranean lands lay peaceful and almost unaware.

On the eastern borders of the Empire the conditions were different. Here, and only here, Rome was in touch with another great power, that of the Parthians. Crassus, Julius Caesar, and Antony had proposed to attempt further conquest in this direction: Crassus and Antony had suffered disgraceful defeat, Caesar's plans had been interrupted by his death. Augustus abandoned the idea of conquest and sought to secure by arms and diplomacy the regions already held. His original plan was two-fold: to protect the line of the upper Euphrates

and the hill-country towards Armenia by maintaining a series of subject kingdoms in these regions; and to keep a strong garrison of legions in the province of Syria to hold the borders of the desert. The motive of this was economy—to avoid a large increase in the legionary establishment: but it proved costly and inconvenient. In Armenia, especially, there was recurring need for Roman intervention. Augustus and his successors, without actually subjugating Armenia, sought to place on its throne a series of native princes educated at Rome and friendly to the imperial government: but Armenian rebellions, fomented by Parthian intrigue, were constantly upsetting this arrangement. In Nero's reign, after matters had gone as far as a serious war, a compromise was effected: the King of Armenia was to be a Parthian, but was to receive his throne as a gift from the Roman emperor—*i.e.* was to acknowledge Roman suzerainty. Further, after the great revolt of the Jews, ending in the sack of Jerusalem in 70, Vespasian largely increased the forces in the east by making Cappadocia and Judaea first-class imperial provinces, each with one or more legions, and the fords of the upper and middle Euphrates were secured by garrison-stations. Augustus' row of subject-kingdoms thus disappeared.

In Trajan's reign (98–117), Parthian relations were again disturbed, and the Emperor, fresh from his victories in Dacia, determined to return to Caesar's policy of eastern conquest. About 114 he took command in person in Syria, entered and reduced Armenia, and advancing southwards down the Euphrates and Tigris, carried the Roman arms right to the Persian Gulf. Four new provinces were annexed—Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Babylonia—and the frontier was now to rest upon the lower edge of the plateau of Iran. But revolts at once broke out in the conqueror's rear. Trajan was called back to the west before his eastern conquests could be organised, and died, worn out with campaigning, on the return journey. His successor, Hadrian, realising that the new territories would be very costly to keep, had the courage to abandon them at once, and return to the limits of Augustus. One new province, however, was retained of Trajan's conquests—the peninsula of Sinai, called the province of “Arabia.”

Arabia proper was left untouched, and the freedom of the Arabs had its results: in the seventh century they were united into a great conquering power by Mohammed and his successors.

In the beginning of the third century, a new enemy appeared on the east. This was the Persian kingdom, which had arisen from the decay and disunion of Parthia. Its great ruler, Shapur, and his successors claimed to recover from Europe all that Persia had lost since the days of Alexander. And since Rome was now hard pressed by the Goths from the north, the Empire was in deadly danger. For thirty or forty years, indeed, it was almost rent in pieces: in the west the Gauls set up to be an independent state; in the east the ambitious princes of Palmyra, who had the courage to resist the Persians with success, claimed to be equals of the Emperor; and elsewhere there was a crop of pretenders to the imperial title. At last Claudius II and Aurelian (268-275), by hard fighting asserted the authority of Rome over an undivided dominion. But the strain had been terrible. Military needs had practically destroyed the constitution of Augustus: great plagues, coming from the east with the movements of the troops, had lowered the vitality of the population: expenditure was at its highest, and resources were declining. A supreme and unassailable authority must be set up if the Empire was to maintain its unity, or indeed its existence.

Such an authority was created by Diocletian, who was elected Emperor by a council of army-officers in 284, and by whom the last vestiges of Augustus' compromise were swept away.

X

EPILOGUE: FROM ROME TO CONSTANTINOPLE

THE new constitution was absolutism undisguised. For three centuries the Roman world had been growing more and more accustomed to the fact, and it was now time to adjust the theory accordingly. Diocletian laid it down that the Emperor

—not the Senate, still less the People, not even the Army—was the supreme and only source of authority. His will was law, his person divine, all government was in his name.

Further, the needs of frontier-defence required that there should be more Emperors than one. It was ordained that two men should have the title *Augustus*, and should be equal in authority: the Augusti should nominate each a junior Emperor, to be called *Caesar*. Each Augustus was to be succeeded by his Caesar, who in turn would choose a Caesar for himself, so that the supreme power was transmitted without dispute or civil war. The four Emperors, thus created, were to divide the Empire among them, each being the head of the military and civil administration in his district. The two Augusti were joint authors and sources of all authority, and from them it flowed throughout the whole organisation of officials of all ranks. Thus there were four *prefectures*, two in the east, two in the west, each with its imperial residence. Within these were twelve *dioceses*, and within these, again, were the *provinces*, now smaller in size and more numerous than those of the Republic or the early Empire.

The armies were by now recruited entirely outside Italy. Since the days of Vespasian, Italians had been exempt from the service, which was filled from the rude and vigorous peoples of the outer provinces where the armies were stationed. Each legion or other regiment was usually kept in the same district for long periods, often for centuries, and thus its members regarded it as their home. The service became hereditary, and the soldiers a class apart from the ordinary peaceful tax-payers. Diocletian and his successors also created an expeditionary army, not for garrison service but to be moved hither and thither as the needs of warfare required.

Taxation, again, was readjusted; most of it was now levied on the capital value of the soil, and paid in kind, not in money. The vast expenditure on frontier wars and the lowering of production made the taxes heavier, and the tax-payers were so fixed and bound in their condition that movement was arrested, lest any should evade the collectors by migration. The chief energies of the state being concentrated upon defence, internal development, which had so splendidly

advanced in previous centuries, was now neglected. The strain on the frontiers was telling upon the centre, and the centre itself had been weakened by the very peace and prosperity of the Golden Age which was now gone. The government, indeed, was compelled to enlist in its armies great numbers of the barbarians whose attacks had weakened it. From the time of Marcus Aurelius onwards, northerners from beyond the Danube and Rhine are brought in and receive lands within the frontiers, in return for which they are to defend them against their own kin. In later centuries, the chiefs of these bands became the kings of new nations which arose as the Empire gradually decayed.

But that decay was long and slow. The Roman Empire continued to exist, at least in name, in the west until near the end of the fifth century, and in the east it stood in actual fact till the Turkish invasion. These two events—the deposition of Romulus Augustulus, last titular Emperor of the West, in 476, and the capture of Constantinople in 1453—lie far beyond the limits of this book. The latter, indeed, represents the beginning of a chapter of history the end of which, as it seems, is being written in our own time, after four and a half centuries of Turkish rule in Europe. But the point at which the present survey may most fittingly stop is the foundation of Constantinople, which ends Ancient History, as its capture marks the close of the Middle Ages.

Diocletian's four-Emperor system broke down almost within his own lifetime. Within twenty years the succession was again in dispute, and the army of Britain, not for the first time, asserted its claim to make an Emperor. Constantine, son of the late Caesar of the west, was proclaimed Augustus by his troops in 306, and by 323 he had made himself sole master of the Empire, winning his final victories on the plains of Thrace round Adrianople and on the other side of the Bosphorus. In 326 he took the bold step of transferring the centre of government to this region, and founded his name-city Constantinople. The new capital, dedicated in May, 330, was sagaciously chosen. From there the Emperor could watch both the Syrian and the Danube frontier—the two zones of danger—more easily than from Italy. He held one

of the great gates of the world's traffic, and commanded the corn-trade from the Black Sea. And the city itself was so strong that it stood impregnable, save by treachery within, for more than a thousand years. Once only, before the Turks came, was it ever taken by assault—by the Crusaders of 1204.

Rome, the mother of the Empire, was thus bereft of the imperial presence. But ere long the city of the Emperors entered upon a new age of power as the city of the Popes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE literature of the subject is immense, and all that can be done here is to introduce the reader, who has entered the study of Roman history through the narrow gateway of this little book, to other guides who may lead him farther afield. Reference may be permitted to two other volumes of *The People's Books*—that on *Julius Caesar*, in which Mr. Hilary Hardinge deals with the central personage of the revolution-period, and that on *The Roman Civilisation*, in which the present writer hopes to treat more widely of various subjects which this book only touches.

W. Warde Fowler's *Rome* (Williams & Norgate) is a succinct and most suggestive essay, which may suitably be read after the present one. The same writer's *City-state of the Greeks and Romans* (Macmillan) is probably the best introduction to the politics of the ancient world.

The best short text-book of the history is the late H. F. Pelham's *Outlines of Roman History* (Rivington's), originally written for the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (and reprinted in the latest edition). It carries the narrative to the end of the Western Empire. Other useful works of short compass are the following: on the Republic, J. L. Myres's *History of Rome* (Rivington's) and W. E. Heitland's *Short History of the Roman Republic* (Cambridge University Press); on the Empire, H. Stuart Jones's *Story of the Roman Empire* (Fisher Unwin); on constitution and administration, A. H. J. Greenidge's *Roman Public Life* (Macmillan) and W. T. Arnold's *Roman Provincial Administration* (Blackwell).

For Roman biography, C. W. C. Oman's *Seven Roman Statesmen* (Arnold), and the lives of Cicero, Julius Caesar, Augustus, and Constantine, in the *Heroes of the Nations Series*, will be found useful.

As regards larger treatises, no bibliography of Roman history can omit mention of the writings of the great master, Theodor Mommsen. His *History of Rome to the Death of Caesar* (Macmillan:

also in Dent's *Everyman* Series) and its companion volumes on *The Provinces of the Roman Empire* (Macmillan) constitute the standard work. W. E. Heitland's volumes on *The Roman Republic* (Cambridge University Press) give a comprehensive and well-balanced survey. Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* should be consulted in J. B. Bury's Edition (Methuen). The first two volumes of the new *Cambridge Mediaeval History* deal with the Empire after Constantine.

Much valuable collateral matter is given in H. Stuart Jones's *Companion to Roman History* (Oxford University Press), and in J. S. Reid's *Municipalities of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge University Press).

Readers who desire to go to the original sources for themselves will, of course, find ample guidance, in the works named, for approaching the writings of Livy, Polybius, Appian, Sallust, Cicero, Caesar, Tacitus, Dio Cassius, &c. The *Roman Lives* of Plutarch may be read in Stewart and Long's translation (Bell & Co.). A spirited impression of the legends of early Rome may be got by reading Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, accessible in many editions.

The maps in Dent's *Atlas of Ancient and Classical Geography* (*Everyman* Series) will be found useful.

John Murray publishes a fine series of *Handy Classical Maps*, and also a *Handy Classical Atlas*, both of which are thoroughly accurate.

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